

Queen, princesses receive condolences

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Majesty Queen Noor, Their Royal Highnesses Princess Basma, Princess Sarvath and Princess Taghrid and other members of the Royal Family on Wednesday received condolences over the death of Queen Zain Al Sharaf from wives of the prime minister, the chief of the Royal Court, the speakers of the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament, wives of former prime ministers and wives of present and former ministers and the King's advisors. They also accepted condolences from Minister of Industry and Trade Rima Khalaf, members of the Upper House of Parliament Leila Sharaf and Naila Rashdan, wives of the directors of Public Security and General Intelligence departments and heads of diplomatic missions, in addition to representatives of the Royal Medical Services, the Christian community in Jordan, Royal Court staff and representatives of the various women's organisations in the Kingdom.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية، الراي.

Pilgrims extend condolences to King

AMMAN (J.T.) — About 1,500 Israeli Arab pilgrims Wednesday arrived at Ghor Nimreen in the central Jordan Valley en route to Mecca to perform this year's pilgrimage. In a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, head of the pilgrims mission Ibrahim Nimr Hussein expressed his heartfelt condolences and those of the pilgrims to His Majesty King Hussein. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad and the Royal Family, over the death of Queen Zain Al Sharaf, the Queen Mother, on Tuesday. He thanked the Jordanian government for the facilities and arrangements made for their pilgrimage. Another group of 1,500 pilgrims will arrive at Ghor Nimreen Thursday en route to Mecca.

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Queen Mother laid to rest

Condolences pour in from Jordanians and foreign countries



Royal Guards officers carry the coffin of Her Majesty Queen Zain Al Sharaf, the Queen Mother, at the outset of Wednesday's funeral (photo by Yousef Al 'Allan)

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Zain Al Sharaf, the Queen Mother, was laid to rest at the Royal Cemetery on Wednesday in a solemn ceremony after funeral prayers at the Royal Guards Mosque.

His Majesty King Hussein, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and other members of the Royal Family led the mourners, who included government and Parliament leaders, judges, royal court officials, senior officials from all branches of the government, Muslim and Christian clergy, Arab and foreign diplomats and representatives of several countries as well as the President of Mali and a special envoy of the Omani sultan.

The funeral services, transmitted live on television and radio, started with a motorcade carrying the body of the late Queen leaving the Basman Palace, where it was kept overnight, to the Raghdan Palace.

The oakwood coffin, draped in the Jordanian flag, was placed atop a gun-carriage by 10 army officers and the funeral procession started with the King and the Crown Prince immediately behind the cortege, which was led by the military band.

Funeral prayers were held at the Royal Guards Mosque and then the funeral procession proceeded to the Royal Cemetery, where the body of the late Queen was laid to rest in the same tomb where the late King Talal was laid to rest in 1974.



A scene from the funeral procession (photo by Yousef Al 'Allan)

His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad, who looked too overcome by grief to remain at their side for long.

Condolences continued to pour in from all over the world.

Among those calling the King personally to express condolences were Yemeni President Ali Abdullah

Salah, and Lebanese President Elias Hrawi and Turkish President Tansu Ciller and Turkish Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetten.

Cables also came from American President Bill Clinton, Russian President Boris Yeltsin, Chinese President Jiang Zemin, French President Francois Mitterrand, Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chair-

man Yasser Arafat, President Demirel, Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller and Turkish Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetten.

Cables of condolences were sent by Saudi Arabia's King Fahd, King Hassan II of Morocco, Sheikh Issa Ben Salman Al Khalifa of

(Continued on page 5)

Israel and PLO go all out for agreement

Arafat, Peres meet today; PLO hopes for help from Christopher

CAIRO (Agencies) — Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) agreed here Wednesday to hold open-ended talks until they finally seal an accord on launching Palestinian self-rule.

"From now on, we will continue in open session until the accord is signed," chief PLO negotiator Nabil Shaath told reporters.

"We will continue work over the weekend to draft the accord," which is to be signed in the Egyptian capital by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, he said.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres will hold talks with Mr. Arafat here on Thursday to prepare the ground for a meeting between the PLO chairman and Mr. Rabin, the Israeli foreign ministry said.

Sources close to the ministry added that Mr. Rabin had instructed Mr. Peres to stay on with the Israeli autonomy negotiators until a final accord was clinched for launching self-rule in Gaza and Jericho.

In contrast to last week, when Dr. Shaath said the accord would be ready for signing between May 2 and May 4, he declined to forecast a date.

"It's difficult to fix a date from now," Dr. Shaath said. U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher was due in Cairo late Wednesday and was also expected to meet Mr. Peres and Mr. Arafat, as well as Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

Mr. Christopher will stay in the hotel where the self-rule negotiations are taking place, which is across the road from Mr. Arafat's residence.

"Arafat-Peres-Warren Christopher: All of these meetings are here to signal to our people that it is very im-

minent," said Dr. Shaath. "The final draft agreement is close to being finished."

He said his Israeli counterpart, General Amnon Shahak, would fly home for consultations in Israel but return on Thursday.

Disputes over the size of an autonomous Jericho and PLO demands to post a Palestinian soldier on the King Hussein Bridge are to be left for Mr. Arafat and Mr. Rabin to resolve, Dr. Shaath said.

"But otherwise we are trying not to leave anything to our leaderships," said the negotiator.

A PLO official said Palestinians hope Mr. Christopher will lean on Israel to cede more authority in autonomous areas.

Faisal Al Hussein, PLO leader in the occupied territories, said Israeli negotiators were jeopardising future security in the Gaza Strip and Jericho by limiting Palestinian power.

"I believe that the Israeli policy is to reduce our authority, which for sure will reduce our control and that will reduce our ability to provide security," said Mr. Hussein, who is visiting Cairo.

Mr. Hussein told reporters the Palestinian delegation here would inform Mr. Christopher of some of the issues obstructing the launch of Palestinian self-rule.

He would be told of the difficulties "so that he can try to convince the Israelis to change" some of the positions, Mr. Hussein said.

Mr. Hussein said although the issue of jurisdiction in the territories remained "the main obstacle" there had been a breakthrough.

He said both sides had agreed that the Israeli military controlling the three lateral

roads linking Israel to the settlements in Gaza would have the right to question non-Israeli and non-Palestinian foreigners.

If the visitors were accused of a serious crime, then they would be handed over to Palestinian authorities, Mr. Hussein said.

But the two sides still disagree on who should have the right to try a Palestinian who attacked a settler, he said, adding he was not taking part in the talks.

He insisted the future Palestinian authorities should be given "full powers," saying incomplete powers would reduce their ability "to provide total security" in Gaza, where Jewish settlements will remain, and in Jericho.

Another PLO official said Israel had agreed in principle to free 3,400 more Palestinian prisoners in return for an amnesty for thousands of Palestinian collaborators.

Israel has already agreed to release 5,000 prisoners once a deal on launching Palestinian self-rule is signed with the PLO.

The PLO official, who refused to be named, said Israel had agreed to the additional releases provided the PLO announced an amnesty for about 3,000 Palestinian collaborators, who live in special camps protected by the Israeli army.

It was uncertain whether the PLO had agreed to meet the terms, and the timetable for the prisoners release was still under discussion.

Israel was still examining the cases of some of the 3,400 prisoners, as it has vowed not to free any Palestinians involved in attacks on Israelis.

Both sides agreed on the

(Continued on page 5)

Jordan awaits Aqaba arrangement to be in place

By Nermeen Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — After the U.S. announced its acceptance of a Jordanian proposal to ease the naval blockade against the port of Aqaba, the Kingdom will await final agreement and implementation before renewing its full participation in the peace process, a senior Jordanian official said Wednesday.

Information Minister Jawad Al Anani told the Jordan Times that the Kingdom is satisfied with the U.S. move, which he said, had "removed a major obstacle and has allowed the Kingdom to shift its position towards renewed participation in the peace process."

But he pointed out that the U.S.-Jordan agreement over

the naval blockade in Aqaba was not "100 per cent complete" and that the Kingdom was awaiting final agreement and implementation before announcing its return to the Middle East peace negotiations.

At a joint conference that followed a meeting in London with His Majesty King Hussein, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher announced that "subject to fine tuning" the U.S. accepted a Jordanian proposal on a new land-based system of verifying compliance with international sanctions against Iraq without the need to intercept ships at midsea.

The acceptance came after months of deliberations which prompted the King to link Jordan's return to the peace talks with Israel to an end to the sea-based inspections of all Jordan-bound vessels by a U.S.-led naval force which Washington calls the multinational Interception Force (MIF).

Dr. Anani said that the U.S. positive response is an indication of the "unfolding realisation of Jordan's important role," another issue that Jordan tied to the renewal of Jordan's participation in the talks.

King Hussein had told representatives of Security Council member countries that he believed the pressure on Jordan "with the Aqaba siege was humiliating to Jordan and indicated a lack of appreciation for Jordan's positive role in promoting peace in the region."

Dr. Anani, who said that the problem with the U.S. could have been averted earlier, said that this latest move will contribute positively to the "credibility of U.S. policies" in the Kingdom.

Politicians and analysts interviewed by the Jordan Times agreed that the Jordan-U.S. agreement has placed Jordan back into its traditionally important role in the Middle East peace process.

Jordan had stuck to its conditions out of total frustration with the U.S. on two occasions where Arabs and Israelis were meeting for multilateral negotiations. Jordan sent only low-level observers to attend the meetings and held back "active participation."

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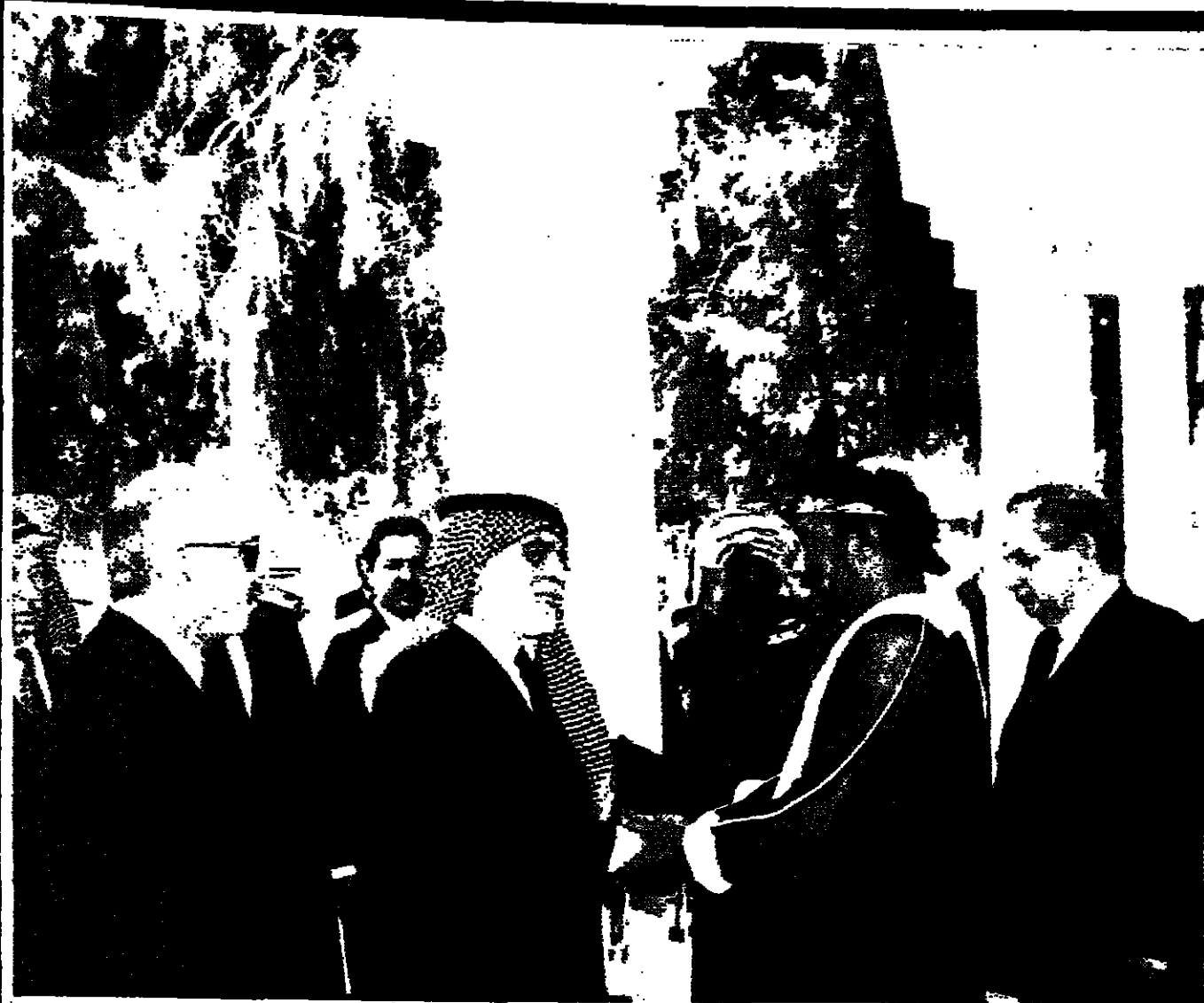
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His Majesty King Hussein receives condolences from Shabib Ben Taymour, advisor to Sultan Qaboos of Oman

Arab delegations arrive to condole King

AMMAN (Petra) — A three-man Omani delegation led by Sultan Qaboos' advisor on environmental affairs Shabib Ben Taymour Wednesday left Amman after attending the burial of Queen Mother Zein Al Sharaf who died Tuesday at the age of 85.

Mr. Ben Taymour conveyed the condolences of Sultan Qaboos to His Majesty King Hussein and to the Hashemite family. The delegation included the Omani Minister of Civil Services Ahmad Makki Abdul Nabi and Secretary General of the Omani Prime Ministry Hmoud Bousaidi. The Omani delegation was seen off by

Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid and the Omani ambassador to Jordan.

Other Arab delegations arrived here Wednesday to attend the burial of Queen Zein and to offer condolences.

Qatari Minister of Finance and Commerce Sheikh Mohammad Ben Khalifah Ben Hamad arrived here to convey the condolences of the Qatari leader, Sheikh Hamad Ben Khalifah Al Thani, to King Hussein.

The Palestinian delegation included Hani Al Hassan and Abbas Zaki, members of the Central Committee of Fatah (the PLO mainstream) who

were joined by the Palestinian ambassador to Jordan Al Tayyeb Abdul Rahim. The three-man delegation attended the funeral of Queen Zein and conveyed the condolences of the Palestinian leadership to King Hussein.

A Palestinian delegation from the occupied West Bank also arrived here via King Hussein Bridge to offer condolences to King Hussein, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad and the Royal Family.

The delegation is led by Abdul Aziz Salhab, head of the Awqaf Council in the

occupied West Bank.

Queen Zein was laid to rest in the Royal Cemetery.

Also Wednesday an Iraqi envoy arrived to convey President Saddam Hussein's condolences to the King. President Hussein's special advisor Khaled Abdul Munim Al Janabi was received by the King's special advisor Khalid Al Karaki.

Later Wednesday Qatari envoy Sheikh Mohammad Ben Khalifah left Amman after conveying Sheikh Hamad Ben Khalifah Al Thani's condolences to the King during an audience attended by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan.

Christians observe mourning period through Easter

AMMAN (J.T.) — Heads of the Christian community in Jordan Wednesday announced the cancellation of all celebrations marking Easter except for religious

ceremonies, in observance of the mourning period for Her Majesty Queen Zein Al Sharaf who died Tuesday. A statement signed by Father

Nabeel Haddad on behalf of the Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic, the Armenian Orthodox, Syrian Orthodox, Coptic, and the Arab Angli-

can churches, expressed grief over the passing of Queen Zein, the Queen Mother, and extended their condolences to the Royal Family.



His Majesty King Hussein leads members of the Royal Family towards the tomb of the late King Talal where Queen Zein was laid to rest Wednesday afternoon



Royal Guards carry the casket of Her Majesty Queen Zein Al Sharaf through the gates of Raghadan Palace

Jordanians remember Queen Zein

AMMAN (Petra) — Representatives of the educational and social sectors Wednesday expressed deep sorrow over the death of the Queen Mother, Her Majesty Queen Zein Al Sharaf, and recalled her great contributions to the advancement of the women and social work in Jordan.

Naela Rashdan, member of the Upper House of Parliament said Jordan will miss the Queen Mother who has brought up Jordan's great leadership.

"While paying our last respects to the Queen Mother, we will be missing her maternal love, and care for the orphans and the poor, as well as her support for Jordanian women."

ress and development.

"Queen Zein left her mark on the Kingdom, thus enabling Jordanian women to reap the fruits of her tireless and dedicated efforts," Dr. Abu Ghazaleh said.

Eida Al Mutlaq, a former member of the National Consultative Council, recalled Queen Zein's struggle to build modern Jordan and noted her efforts to advance the status of women. "Her bright thoughts were embodied in the formulation of the first Jordanian Charter, a document ensuring democracy, social justice and equality for all Jordanians, men and women alike," Dr. Mutlaq said.

Former GJFW President Haifa Al Bashir said the Queen Mother laid down the foundation stone of the Jordanian branch of the Arab Women's Federation in 1944, which was formed to support

the Palestinian struggle against Zionist aims.

Ms. Al Bashir recalled Queen Zein's concern and care for orphaned children. "When the leader gave Jordanian women the right to vote in 1974, the Queen Mother opened her palace to receive congratulations," she said.

Hind Abdul Jaber, President of Business and Professional Women's Club, said Queen Zein was an example and a pioneer in social work. "Queen Zein was an example to Jordanian women in the field of social development."

Her roles as honorary president of Um Al Hussein Orphanage and chairperson of the first Jordanian Women's Society bear witness to this," Ms. Abdul Jaber said. Queen Zein directed the women's movement to serve local communities, she added.

Director of Um Al Hussein Orphanage Muslih Suleiman Khalaf said Queen Zein "started her march in the 1950s and has always looked after the orphanage's children." He added that the Queen Mother always called on Jordanian women to contribute towards the humanitarian work of the orphanage.

Director of the Consultations and Community Service Centre at Yarmouk University Ahmad Al Khatib said Wednesday was a day of grief and sorrow for all Jordanians, because the Queen Mother is the mother of all Jordanians.

"Her patronage of the orphanages and charity homes all over Jordan embodies the intrinsic maternal values and loyalty to the homeland ... values that she had attempted to instill in every home," he said.



The funeral procession marches towards the Royal Guards Mosque

Studies on widespread ailment nearly non-existent in Jordan

By Natasha Bukhari
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Studies to cure peptic ulcers, which are common among peoples of the third world, are limited among Jordan's specialists and non-existent in the Jordanian Doctors Union (JDU).

For years, doctors believed that the only way to help stomach ulcer patients was by giving them pain killers to minimise the discomfort caused by ulcers. Nevertheless, hope to cure this nagging ailment has been restored by medical researchers in the U.S.

A March, 1994 report published by the British magazine, the Economist, said an expert panel put together by the NIH has reached the conclusion that peptic ulcers are linked with infection caused by the insect Helicobacter.

The report titled "Ulcer Freedom Fighters," has been received by media channels with enthusiasm; it was published in the Jordan Times' Health and Medicine column on March 31 and in Al-Aswaq daily. It was also featured by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) network Monday evening.

Still such a breakthrough in medical research, which promises the treatment of the

infection rather than just the symptoms, is being received with indifference by our specialists.

One of Jordan's medical experts told the Jordan Times that this new method of treatment "does not work."

The report, however, said that research has proved that two weeks of antimicrobial treatment "should do the job."

"A mixture of Pepto-Bismol (an U.S. brand antacid), metronidazole and either tetracycline or amoxicillin, gets rid of the infection in 90 per cent of patients," said the report.

According to JDU Director Ishaq Maraqa the JDU's activities do not include medical follow up on the latest studies or reports.

"Doctors subscribe to different medical magazines that publish the latest in the area of medical science, and it is up to each doctor whether or not to adopt those medical practices," Dr. Maraqa told the Jordan Times Tuesday.

Observers argue that the indifference of the JDU to inform the public, and specialists in particular, on the latest methods of disease treatments is unjustified. The JDU's role is to offer the best kind of services to the

public, and that involves making available modern treatment practices, one doctor told the Jordan Times.

Dr. Maraqa said that it is the responsibility of the different specialists' societies to conduct research and studies that deal with modern medical practices.

The second doctor, who asked not to be named, told the Jordan Times that the JDU "does nothing" to update doctors' knowledge on certain medical issues.

He added that most doctors are busy doing their work and sometimes miss out on important issues.

"It would be helpful if the

JDU drew the attention of specialists in the country on matters of medical concern before they are published in the papers," he said.

"According to the Economist report, the germ-fighting treatment not only frees patients of agonising pain, but also saves them money. By using the two-week treatment, patients would not have to spend so much on ulcer pain relief medications for the rest of their lives."

On behalf of
His Majesty the King of Spain,
the government and the Spanish people,
the Spanish Embassy presents its
heartfelt condolences to
His Majesty King Hussein,
the Royal Hashemite Family and to the
people of Jordan for the passing away of
**Her Majesty the Queen Mother
Zein Al Sharaf.**

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Two to 'fine tune'

THE ANNOUNCEMENT by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in London Monday at a joint press conference with His Majesty King Hussein that Washington had finally and officially accepted a land-based system for verifying compliance with international sanctions against Iraq should be viewed as an integral part of the effort to push the Middle East peace process forward. The U.S. had in fact signalled its acceptance of such an idea in principle much earlier and in the wake of King Hussein's meeting with the ambassadors of the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council a few weeks ago to serve notice that the blockade of Aqaba by a U.S.-led naval force had become unbearable politically and economically. King Hussein also served notice on the international community that Jordan could no longer play a pivotal role in the Arab-Israeli peace process as long as it was treated as a suspect by Washington.

Mr. Christopher's official endorsement of Jordan's long standing plan to replace the multinational interception force (MIF) inspection by an Aqaba-based regime manned by an independent body like Lloyds Register demonstrates that the Monarch's policy on this vexing issue has paid off. But that does not mean that Jordan was "black-mailing" any government. This was never Jordan's style in conducting its foreign policy. Rather it is a case of saying enough is enough when the nation's patience has been pushed to the limit and its integrity unduly questioned.

What could still concern Jordan is the caveat attached to the otherwise "good news" that the Aqaba siege will be lifted after all. The secretary of state was careful in stipulating that his government's yielding to reason is "subject to some fine tuning." This "tuning" could spell trouble unless it too remains reasonable. There is every fear that the U.S. could end up taking away by one hand what it purports to give away by the other. Should this be the case, we think that Jordan should stick to its guns and refrain from making any solemn commitments to rejoin the Washington peace talks.

As a matter of fact, no unequivocal position on the bilateral or the multilateral peace negotiations could be wisely made unless and until this "tuning" of the land-based verification scheme is resolved to the satisfaction of the country. Amman can of course declare its acceptance to participate in the projected peace talks in principle subject also to "some fine-tuning," which could be made as soon as the "fine tuning" on the Aqaba controversy is taken care of. Nothing short of this quid pro quo arrangement can in fact solve the problem to everybody's satisfaction.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

JORDANIAN Arabic dailies Wednesday commented on the passing of Her Majesty Queen Zein Al Sharaf, the Queen mother who passed away Tuesday.

Al Ra'i said the Jordanian family was grieved by the passing of Her Majesty Queen Zein Al Sharaf after a life embodied by caring for the Jordanian family in every respect. The Jordanian family mourns her death, remembering the great deeds she undertook during her lifetime, particularly with regard to her setting the bases for voluntary work and pushing forward activities in the field of education. Her passing is regretted by all Jordanians who will always remember her as a symbol of mercy.

Al Dustour said that a cloud of sorrow overwhelmed Jordan when news about the death of the Queen Mother spread. As we bid her farewell, the paper added, we remember her good deeds and honourable principles. We convey condolences to the Jordanian people for this great loss.

Sawt Al Shabab said that the Queen Mother was the mother of all Jordanians who contributed through her unwavering efforts to building up modern Jordan. The late Queen instilled in her children the message of the Great Arab Revolt and dedicated her life to serving the causes of Jordan and the Arab Nation. The late Queen achieved gains for the women's causes, cared for social services and supported charity organisations. Words cannot express our sorrow for her death, said the paper.

Arab society and the forces that shape it

By Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdoubeh

AT PRESENT a great deal of discourse is going on, though more at the informal than the formal level, about the so-called "state" of Arab society at large. The questions people raise in connection with this particular matter — at times rhetorically, at times sceptically, at times cynically, and at times innocently, boil down to whether our Arab society is ultimately advancing, is at a standstill or is in fact moving backwards.

Admittedly, such questions sound, at one level, absurd and nonsensical. For one thing, they are too general, absolute and abstract to make much sense. For another, how can one measure a process as complex and intricate as social change or development? We can easily place a germ under a microscope and study it, but what microscope are we to place society under? Furthermore, who is qualified to judge? The man in the street, the politician, the media person, the teacher, the sociologist, the economist, the engineer, the theologian or the foreign visitor?

The other day, I was talking to a real estate agent. I found his own "theory" about the Arab Nation of today, derived from his experience in the real estate market in Amman and his observations about Amman's physical expansion and architectural designs, more coherent and persuasive than those of many of my fellow university scholars. Moreover, what do we mean by Arab "society"? Yes, there is a general umbrella and an overall Arab entity, even though it is nowadays more assumed than actual. But there are, at the same time, so many significant local varieties within the Arab World as a whole and within each individual country. Southern Egypt is as different from northern Egypt as Bahrain is from neighbouring Oman.

At another level, the questions are easy to answer. Our society, we can simply say, is at once advancing and regressing, like any society in any part of the world at any particular moment in history. This is an undeniable sociological, anthropological and historical reality applicable as much to Plato's Greece as to Mu'awia's Arabia, Carlyle's England and Bill Clinton's America. No society is perfect. A gain in one direction seems to be at the expense of a loss in another. Emerson appears to be quite right: "Society never advances. It recedes as fast on one side as it gains on another... For everything that is given, something is taken. Society acquires new arts and loses old instincts."

Absolutely! Each society, examined in totality, is impressive in some ways, is downright dull and boring in others and is entirely intolerable in certain respects. Our Arab society is no

exception, peculiar though it may often seem. We have our own moments of success and breakthroughs, our own moments of aloofness and stupidity and our own moments of utter failure. Like other peoples. Today's Western civilisation is comfortable, benign, attractive and constructive; simultaneously, it is (to itself and to others) unbearable, cruel, repulsive and destructive. Look at what is happening in Bosnia.

I often avoid delving into discussions of a general nature (for the reasons stated above), even though, like many, I cannot resist the temptation. Discourse on Arab society has a seductive ring to it, in addition to being extremely important to anyone living in it of course. This is especially true during these "pregnant" times, when so much is either happening or expected to happen, politically, economically and socially. In the remaining few years of the present century, when the pangs of labour are beginning to be sharply felt, we are all holding our breath in anxious anticipation of the baby to be born. The year 2001 is rapidly approaching. What is it going to be? A mouse or a camel? An angel or a beast? Democracy or dictatorship? Freedom or oppression? Peace for all or violence for everybody? Economic prosperity or economic hardship? Arab solidarity or further Arab fragmentation? An active role for the Arab Nation in the march of human civilisation or a bewildered mess in the margins of history? The suspense is killing us; we want to know. It seems to me we have as much right (and as much justification) as Ibn Khaldoun and Ralph Waldo Emerson had to discuss, comment and theorise on the current state of Arab society. All opinions ought to be not only aired and tolerated but also heard — the housewife's as much as the scholar's, the butcher's as much as the economist's, the student's as much as the teacher's, the liberal's as much as the fundamentalist's.

My own humble hypothesis about the present and future condition of Arab society — based on my 10 years of university teaching, my observation of campus academic political and bureaucratic life, my modest relation to the media and my enthusiastic interest in public life — is this. To understand the said Arab condition, we must familiarise ourselves with the forces at work in the Arab society of today. The way I see it, there are three major forces cutting across almost all spheres and dimensions of our public and private life.

The first is epitomised in a minority group. Let's call it group A. It comprises people from the various walks of life whose performance is truly outstanding and admirable: mothers, fathers, neighbours, students, teachers, drivers, pedestrians, farmers, civil servants, policemen, bankers, economists, political scientists, physicians, nurses, theolo-

gians, politicians and writers among others. These are highly responsible, remarkably committed and immensely civilised members of society. My guess, and I believe it is an "educated" guess, is that their percentage in the Arab World does not exceed 20 out of 100, a percentage significantly lower than in the so-called developed countries. It is to them that we owe much of the progress or advancement our society is undergoing (I say "much" because part of the progress can be attributed to the force of history and to external influences coming from world community: others invent computers, we buy them and use them, willingly or unwillingly). The main problem with this group is that it is generally not given the chance it deserves and the location it needs from which to launch and assert itself more effectively, for a variety of reasons. Most members of this group are too polite, shy, modest, and inaggressive to make the desirable impact. Generally, they are the unknown soldiers.

The second is represented by group B, a substantial majority — at least 60 per cent I would say. It comprises members from the same walks of life as in A. Such group does not make any important impact on society, directly that is. Its members are what we often call (at best) middle-of-the-road individuals. They are on the whole too aloof, too carefree, too disinterested, too lazy and too detached.

The third force, group C, is also a minority group, perhaps no more than 20 per cent. However, its impact on the Arab society is both most significant and alarming. Its members are highly motivated, tremendously aggressive, remarkably shrewd, and they enjoy an unbelievable level of stamina. Generally, they are selfish, disrespectful of others, and subversive. They have very low moral values. I call them system breakers, the AIDS virus which is ferociously attacking the Arab World's immune system. Clearly, they derive much of their strength (aside from their own perverse ways and degraded character traits) from the ineffectiveness of the other two groups.

The solution? We, as society, need to give group A a better chance than it is given, and we need to pay more attention to group B. Group A itself must also try to assert itself more eloquently; to express its own mind more forcefully, to fight for what it believes to be right and to make itself visible. Group B must wake up and get involved. If this happens, group C will inevitably weaken and perhaps even vanish. If this does not happen group C will continue to drag our society toward the brink of disaster. If the status quo in the Arab society remains as it is, the baby we are expecting in the early years of the coming century will most probably be a mouse. This is my own hypothesis plain and simple. What is yours?



Authoritarian rule seen persisting in South Korea

By Moon Ihlwan

Reuter

SEOUL — The abrupt removal of South Korea's prime minister shows that authoritarian rule persists despite President Kim Young-Sam's much-publicised drive to remove the remnants of the once-dominant military dictatorship, analysts said.

Last week's forced resignation of Lee Hoi-Chang, one of South Korea's most widely respected political figures, underscores Mr. Kim's refusal to tolerate challenges to his authority, they said.

Presidential aides have said that Mr. Lee was dropped

because he challenged Mr. Kim's "sovereign power".

But Bae Kwon-II, a political science professor at Inha University, said Mr. Lee was simply trying to carry out the premier's role as defined in the constitution.

"The way Lee was dismissed made the civilian government look more rigid than the previous governments," he told Reuters.

Mr. Lee had refused to adopt the role of his predecessors, who merely performed ceremonial duties despite constitutional provisions that the prime minister should oversee the government and its policies.

The shock announcement of Mr. Lee's forced resignation came shortly after the cancellation of a weekly security meeting on the North Korean nuclear problem. Mr. Lee, who had said he should approve all decisions made at such meetings, was excluded from the session.

The meeting was steered by Mr. Kim's chief secretary, although three senior cabinet ministers were among the six members. Mr. Lee said the cabinet, and not a small group of people associated with the president, should chart the main course of the government.

A day later, Mr. Kim reproached Mr. Lee Hoi-Chang for issuing the instruction and replaced him with deputy premier and unification minister Lee Yung-Dug, a man known for his conservative and docile image.

A presidential spokesman said the move showed the president's determination to firm up the cabinet's discipline under the presidential system.

The Hankuk Ilbo newspaper, however, contrasted the move with Mr. Kim's frequent statements that the prime minister and cabinet should work with conviction and responsibility.

Jordan tackles population challenge

By Dr. Faris Ammar

JORDAN, LIKE any other developing country, is confronting major population issues that are negatively affecting the development process in its human, economic and social dimensions. Such issues include a rapid increase in population growth and fertility rates, unemployment and imbalances in geographic distribution of the population as a result of the uncontrolled local migration and the great influx of Jordanian returnees from Kuwait during the Gulf crisis. These issues have added a continuous pressure on the already exhausted national expenditures on social services, education and health.

Jordan believes that tackling population challenges lies mainly within the responsibilities of each state and government which should construct its own national policy and strategy for population. National population policy is a compendium of direct and indirect set of procedures and criteria de-

fined and designed by government and non-governmental organisations and adopted by the state. It seeks to direct population behaviour in relation to various demographic variables such as fertility, mortality and migration with the aim of achieving a synergy between population growth rate and available resources within society. It also seeks to affect a positive change in geographic distribution of population that would lead to the affluence and well-being of society.

Within this context, I would like to reiterate Jordan's position through the following elements, the foundation of the national policy on population: Reducing the level of demographic elements such as fertility, mortality and migration. Creating a synergy between population growth and economic, social and environmental resources. Asserting the rights of parents in choosing the number of children according to the

norms, values, traditions and religion of society.

Effecting a positive change in the socio-economic dimension of population.

Emphasising the importance of the role of non-governmental and voluntary organisations in population activities and programmes.

Reducing the rate of migration from rural to urban areas as it is an essential factor for improving geographic distribution of population.

Highlighting the importance of preserving the health of mothers and infants.

Enhancing the status of women.

Jordan attaches great value to the importance of the development and enhancement of women. Women and development have become a major priority of the national population policy of the country, and work has intensified to reduce further illiteracy among women, increase the number of women joining secondary education, increase women's participation in the labour forces and

other economic activities, reduce unemployment among women, and raise the level of women's participation in political life. In this regard, I would like to note that in the latest parliamentary elections, a woman was elected to the Lower House. Two other women have been appointed at the Upper House. Jordan has one of the lowest illiteracy rates among women in the world.

Population is an important and vital element of sustainable development. Human integrity and well-being, coupled with environment, integrity and economic efficiency are the basic variables that constitute sustainable development.

The writer is an adviser to the government on economic and environmental affairs. The above is based on a speech he gave at a meeting of the preparatory committee for the International Conference on Population and Development, which took place in New York.

Afghans look to U.N. to end years of civil war

By Jane Macartney

Reuter

HERAT, Afghanistan — "In the past the United Nations chose to leave Afghanistan at a crucial time. Will this mission also leave us in the lurch?" Afghan woman teacher Aziza wanted to know.

"Inshallah (God willing) no," was the reply from U.N. special envoy Mahmoud Mestiri, who is this month leading a peace caravan around Afghanistan.

Mr. Mestiri's mission aims to end two years of internecine war among rival factions in the Islamic coalition government that has accelerated the destruction of a country already reeling from 13 years of Soviet occupation and civil war.

Expectations of the United Nations are high.

Thousands lined the streets to welcome Mr. Mestiri to the northern city of Mazar-I-Sharif, powerbase of ex-Communist warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostum, tossing poppies at his car and brandishing placards reading "no war, we want peace."

Mr. Dostum, his forces allied with the radical Hezb-I-Islami group of Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar against President Burhanuddin Rabbani in the struggle for power in Kabul, was eager to show his enthusiasm for the United Nations.

Blackbearded horsemen in Mr. Dostum's garrison headquarters vied for the honour of showing Mr. Mestiri a round of Buzkashi, a game resembling soccer on horseback in which the aim is to wrestle the headless carcass of a goat from mounted opponents and to fling it into a circle marked by chalk.

Students at Mazar-I-Sharif's Balkh University said they were confident the United Nations would stop the fighting in Kabul, collect the thousands of heavy weapons from guerrilla hands and supervise elections.

"We have expectations from you and our expectations are high," Aziza told Mr. Mestiri in a meeting in the western city of Herat.

Diplomats and even U.N. officials acknowledge privately that Afghans may be deeply disappointed if they invest high hopes in the U.N. peace mission.

"I'm nervous that nothing will come of this and then there will be a backlash against the U.N.," one official said privately.

In August 1992, as Aziza emerged briefly from Pundah to remind Mr. Mestiri, the United Nations evacuated Kabul when the city came under a blistering rocket and artillery bombardment by

Mr. Hekmatyar.

The United Nations has yet to reestablish a permanent presence in a capital where rockets are a daily hazard. Funding diminishes each year as international donors become increasingly reluctant to invest in a land where fighting is the order of the day.

Security considerations that colour U.N. policy are lost on ordinary Afghans in Kabul who have nowhere else to run and regard the U.N. withdrawal as an abandonment.

As the bloody battle for supremacy in Kabul drags into a third year, leaving 11,000 dead since the guerrillas took power in April 1992, Afghans say they have little choice but to pin their hopes on some form of U.N. intervention.

Critics such as Mazar-I-Sharif and Herat are prospering from months of peace, but fears linger that the lack of a ceasefire in Kabul threatens their fragile order. Armed men are visible everywhere.

Mr. Dostum receives guests in Mazar-I-Sharif at his headquarters in the fort of war, a rambling mud stronghold built in the late 19th century.

Looking slightly ill at ease in a business suit, the ex-Communist militia general proudly showed off 32 jet fighters to Mr. Mestiri at his main Shibarghan air base.

Mr. Dostum's show of might was matched in Herat where rival governor Ismail Khan paraded one-legged veterans on crutches, U.S.-made Stinger missiles, rocket launchers mounted on camels and dozens of Soviet-made tanks on the second anniversary of the fall of the ancient city to the mujahideen.

Commandos killed, skinned and ate raw snakes in front of the reviewing stand. SU-22 jets skimmed the heads of the crowd.

"This is a preliminary step by the U.N.," Mr. Khan, an ally of Mr. Rabbani, said after meeting the mission.

Mr. Khan, a veteran guerrilla commander during 13 years of jihad against the former Soviet-backed government, did not appear impatient for a quick end to the fighting in Kabul that kills several people each day.

Mr. Mestiri disagreed: "I have found that time is not very important in Afghanistan... But time is important for us."

A week earlier, Mr. Mestiri identified the biggest problem facing his mission, the lust for power that motivates the battle among the leaders.

Ballooning — a new way to discover Jordan

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Some of us have experienced the wonders of Wadi Rum by moving around on foot, horseback, camel or cars. We were awed by the magnificent landscape of pinkish, rocky mountains eroded by centuries of nature's elements, yet craggy and with steep slopes that delight the mountaineers.

Imagine now seeing all this marvelous scenery while soaring high in the sky. One can do it by flying a balloon, an adventure made possible by the Jordan Tourism Investments (JTI) and Virgin Airship and Balloons of England.

One clear Thursday morning, with blue skies and not one gust of wind, I made this unforgettable trip over Wadi Rum in a balloon flying the colours of our airline, Royal Jordanian.

"Jump aboard and let us start the trip," Captain Graham Connolly, a professional balloonist with years of experience as an aircraft and balloon pilot, told us after preparations for take off. The flames, like a dragon spitting fire, were hissing, breaking the silence of the early morning.

The padded basket attached to the balloon, (which was to be our flight cabin) was held to the ground by two trainees and ready for us to hop in. The eight of us, maximum capacity, went aboard and the balloon started to slowly rise to



The beauty of Wadi Rum as seen from the balloon in the early hours of the morning (Photo by Rana Hussein)

the sky. Half an hour later, at 3,000 feet, our cruise altitude, the breeze was gently caressing our

faces and the silence was interrupted only by the droning of the flames heating the air to keep us

afloat. Under us, the red dunes of the Wadi and the softly curved mountains were in-

terrupted by bushes among which sheep were unperturbedly grazing. The bucolic atmosphere

is indeed "history in the making", as Capt. Connolly put it, bringing one back in time to a more

peaceful era in the existence of humankind. "Balloons are creatures of the sky and are made to

fly freely and aimlessly in the atmosphere," said the captain, adding: "You do not have to be a bird to fly in the sky, the balloon is there to make your wishes come true."

And like birds we felt indeed up there, carefree and elated, wishing that the trip would never come to an end.

But, like all good things in life, our flight had to come to an end. We slowly started losing altitude and the round bird calmly came to rest on the ground gliding on a gently slope of air.

"We do not have to experience the risk hikers go through climbing the mountain. The mountain is there for us to see and enjoy with no risks," said the captain. "Besides, it is the safest flying method around, and passengers are fully insured as in most airlines."

The exhilarating adventure costs JD 75 per hour and JD 40 for half an hour for Jordanians and for foreigners JD 110 and JD 65 respectively.

Trips are organised daily, early in the morning and late in the afternoon, when "winds are gentle and the view is most remarkable."

Capt. Connolly is currently training three Jordanian pilots and three copilots. They are expected to take over their jobs in one year's time.

The flying season is April through June and September through December.

As for the experience, it is a wonderful way of discovering the beauty of our country.

Our artists need to have a decent life too

By Mohammad Masarira

The "dictatorship of geography" was, no doubt, behind the emergence of some historical facts and also the definition of the state's principled policies, as well as Jordan's social, cultural and economic structure.

Geography is also responsible for keeping the Kingdom surrounded by certain regimes and states that can by no means accept any form of rule not catering to their own taste nearby, as they usually threaten with their tribal mentality to impose their own will.

This is clearly manifested in the neighbouring regimes' stand towards Jordan at the official, political and social levels concerning various questions. This has no doubt forced Jordan to take meticulous care in handling matters considered sensitive to its neighbours.

Only once did Jordan try to deal with matters differently — during the Gulf crisis — with the result that it brought upon itself the wrath and the curse of these neighbours.

As a result, our people have been paying a heavy price in the form of siege, humiliation and boycott.

Also as a consequence, a large number of Jordanian artists who were able to compete with their Egyptian and Syrian counterparts in the 1970s and 1980s are now subjected to collective punishment.

During the Gulf War, the Jordanian Artists Association (JAA) naturally supported the official and national Jordanian stand but it is now paying the price for assuming that attitude, JAA President Mohammad Abbadi said.

He says "our stand regarding the Gulf crisis has brought about a decline in the Jordanian standard of living and has been responsible for our humiliation," Abbadi said. "The majority of Jordanian artists are now unemployed and some have been forced to sell their furniture for survival."

AMMAN CULTURAL PULSE

Artists surely hope that the situation would improve and the attitude of the neighbouring regime would change after re-examining their policies and would once again accept the Jordanian artists' works, he added.

Jordanian artist and television producer Mohammad Barmawi said to date nothing has changed despite promises made at the official level here. He said officials had promised to deal with the ordeal of the Jordanian artists and help ensure for them the minimum level of decent living until the situation improves but nothing

happened as yet.

Abbadi and Barmawi are in agreement that the state which owns and operates the media for television and radio broadcasting has a special responsibility towards the artists who have no access to the markets of the neighbouring countries under the current circumstances. The state is also responsible in this regard since it does not allow the private sector to own and operate commercial television stations which could absorb part of the artists' work.

"We demand that the state interfere on two fronts," Abbadi said. "First he said financing local television drama series since local production firms tend to shun entering into such ventures under the present circumstances."

"Such a move can help find employment for many qualified artists and actors and so save them from the humiliation of poverty and decline," Abbadi said.

He stresses that the state has the capability and the potential to finance television production. This is clear from the fact that the state has been in the practice of spending \$100,000 on a single artistic function, a sum that could finance the production of three local television series of high quality.

Secondly, Abbadi called on the government to do something to amend current regulations and legislations

with the aim of protecting the rights and the interests of the Jordanian artists.

He said the government could change the present situation in which preference is given to the Egyptian and Syria television series which are normally bought at rates three times more than those paid for local productions.

The government can stop employing artists and actors from neighbouring Arab states under the pretext that this is being done in response to conditions and terms required by these countries that later import and screen Jordanian television series.

It should be noted here that Information Minister Jawad Anani, who last Thursday heard some of the complaints from the Jordanian artists, has committed himself to ensuring the allocation of JD 1 million to finance the production of 10 Jordanian television series of fine quality.

Mr. Anani also promised to put forth the artists plight at a cabinet meeting and advocate their just cause.

Barmawi, who is also JAA vice-president, believes that the major help that could come from the government to the artists lies in speeding up the implementation of a new artists association law because the JAA and its regulations constitute the best guarantee for the artists' survival and ensures the artists' careers.

From the eye of an expatriate

By Claire Davies

Jordan has been the subject of an extensive survey to find out what expatriates living here really think of the country in which they are based, their adaptation to a different culture, the high points and the disappointments. Over one hundred expatriates were contacted originating from twelve different countries though almost 50 per cent of those questioned were of British nationality. The ratio of women to men respondents was 3:2, and although the survey included some expatriates permanent resident in the country through marriage, the average period of time expatriates were spending in the country was between 2-4 years. 20 per cent of respondents had been sent to Jordan by their company or government, the majority having taken a personal decision to work abroad — seeking a combination of higher wages, better career prospects, tourism and travel.

Expatriates the world over often seize the opportunity of being based in a foreign land to travel sometimes extensively, in the region in which they are based. Expatriates in Jordan are no different. The top-ranking holiday destination for these people is Syria (despite the high cost of entry visa's for nationalities such as the British in JD 37). Forty six per cent of respondents had either already visited or had the intention of visiting the country, beating Egypt into second place with 37 per cent. Obviously, proximity (it is only 4 hours by car from Amman to Damascus) and, in general, the cheaper cost of living on the other side of the border are attractive incentives.

Egypt, given its vastly greater self-promotion in the tourism industry and long-established popularity scores surprisingly low, perhaps due to the highly publicised attacks on tourists by terrorist groups over the past year. Lebanon appears to be slowly shrugging off its war-torn

reputation as a terrorist haven (albeit a Western opinion), and enticing visitors back — one third of respondents have already visited or intend to visit the country. Saudi Arabia, alongside Kuwait, finds itself at the bottom of the pile with just 11 per cent. On further examination, many of those questioned cited the restrictions on freedom for women as their prime reason for not wishing to visit the Gulf.

The Western media is often accused of giving the Middle East a bad press and although Jordan's popularity as a tourist destination appears to be on the increase, relatively few Westerners have experienced the lifestyle first hand. With this in mind, respondents were asked what they considered to be common misconceptions, in their home countries, about Jordan as a country and the lifestyle led within.

Discussion of weather conditions must be as close to British hearts as the traditional "English cuppa." Given the predominantly British slant on the survey one should not be surprised therefore to see the climate featuring prominently in this list. Seventy five per cent respondents felt that their fellow countrymen, no doubt shivering under drizzly skies back home, believed temperatures rarely, if ever, dipped below 30 degrees Centigrade. (If only it were true).

If the tourist authorities here are pleased at that bit of news, the next may provide food for thought — Almost 50 per cent of those questioned thought that outsiders perceived Jordan to be "politically unstable" and a dangerous country to visit; a perception which could no doubt be equally applied to a whole group of countries in this region. Other perceived misconceptions were concerned principally with the confusion of Jordan with countries in the Gulf. Commonly cited misconceptions included: Oil-rich, illegal to drink, veils for women obligatory, lack of women's rights, and only desert landscape.

Relatively few expatriates appear to socialise in principally Jordanian circles, expatriates in Jordan through marriage to a Jordanian understandably accounting for the majority of this number. The bulk of expatriates tend to mix with fellow countrymen and other expatriates who's idea of entertainment and, perhaps more importantly, language is the same as their own. Of those questioned only 5 per cent claimed to be fluent in Arabic and whilst 30 per cent professed to have basic communication skills, only a quarter of those questioned were taking lessons. An indication perhaps of the lack of social and also business necessity, given the high standard of English spoken by many Jordanians.

Despite the lack of understanding of the Arabic language, 43 per cent of respondents purported to possess a good understanding of Islam, with another 45 per cent wishing to build on their current awareness.

Turning to another topic, Western countries are often seen to be pro-Israeli and media reports regarding the Palestinian struggle biased in Israel's favour. In support of this view, over 20 per cent of respondents admitted that their understanding of the Palestinian issue was what they now consider to have been inaccurate prior to coming to Jordan. Another 50 per cent had only a vague understanding of the issues involved, however did consider this understanding to be accurate.

As regards the likelihood of success in the Middle East peace talks, there were no surprises — expatriates are split, fairly predictably so, fifty-fifty on the chances for peace.

Expatriates were also asked to give their opinion on a scale of 1-5, (1 being excellent and 5 poor), of certain facilities and services in Jordan. Out in front by a long way was the taxi service — cheap, reliable, friendly, everywhere when you need them, and who minds the odd crash every now and then at that price? At the other

end of the spectrum, two-thirds of respondents find the entertainments available in Amman i.e. concerts, theatre, cinema, etc. either unsatisfactory or poor. This could be a direct result of the greater cultural emphasis on family and home life here than in the West, and the relative lack of expectations as regards entertainment outside the home. Restaurants, however, seem to please the expatriates, the reasonable prices and wide variety from which to choose making their frequentation a popular evening out.

Whilst sports facilities and public transport were awarded the ubiquitous "OK", tourism facilities received the thumbs down. Expatriates may be pleased to hear that the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities has recently prepared a detailed study on a new strategy to promote internal and external tourism in Jordan. Currently however, access to some tourist sites can be a problem without the use of private transport, no doubt due to the prevalence of organised tour buses. This, of course, is no reflection on the quality of sites which can be visited — Petra is frequently described as "awesome, beautiful, out of this world" and visitors are often fortunate enough to have such delights to themselves — barring the odd camel, goat herder or bedouin trying to sell the all-important souvenirs.

Jordan is a beautiful country. There is much diversity and the majority of expatriates live happily within the much-respected Arab culture. But now for the crunch question — Expatriates were asked: "Given the opportunity and career prospects to remain in Jordan indefinitely, would you stay?" Only 10 per cent answered "yes". I guess this just goes to prove that age-old saying, "there's no place like home."

The writer is a freelance journalist based in London. She recently ended a three-month stay in Jordan. Ms. Davies contributed the above article to the Jordan Times.

Painful translation

By Jean-Claude Elias

I was recently given a copy of a language translation programme for personal computers (PC). The friend who gave it to me was asking whether I could test and evaluate the said software.

Knowing that even on large mainframe computers there is nothing such as a good translation software (not yet at least), I had all the reasons to be sceptical about the reality of this product on a humble PC. Nevertheless, having in hand five small floppy disks that promised to translate any text from English to French or from English to German, in both directions, I could not but rush home and try it for myself on my PC.

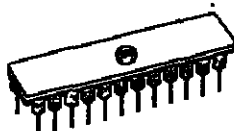
I was right. It did not take long to find that the programme doesn't provide a translation good enough to be seriously used. It is just a little better than the word-to-word translation available on small hand held machines — the ones that look like pocket calculators.

The software though is fun to use. First you specify the language to translate from and the one to translate to. Then you type in a text, as in a regular word processor and ask the programme to start the translation. It takes only three or four seconds to "translate" a 60-word paragraph on a 486-class computer.

The final result however, is disappointing. The system doesn't take into consideration any of the language particularities nor the idioms. It does not analyse the context of the sentence (its meaning). It does however, follow the simple syntax and grammar rules like plurals, gender, inversion of adjectives and nouns, etc... In a specific case it made a gross error — translating from English to French, it added an extra "e" to "superbe", making it "superbee" for the feminine!

In the best case, such a translation will give a very rough idea of the meaning of the source language. In the worst, it could be totally misleading. In no case, the obtained result can be used in real life, whatever the purpose of the operation. The system is hopeless even in very simple cases like, for instance, giving instructions

chip talk



to a tourist.

For decades now, analysts and programmers have been desperately trying to design a perfect translation software. Solving the problem means fighting at three different levels: processing power or speed, data storage and finding the right algorithms or the methods of programming. Today's mainframes provide more than enough power and disk storage for this purpose. The complexity of the algorithms however is such that even with huge processing power and data storage, the result is not satisfactory.

The major difficulty comes from the above mentioned points — idioms, context, etc... These elements do not obey definable rules.

They are therefore, difficult if not impossible to translate. Making the computer memorise all the possible variations and idiomatic expressions is tantamount to teaching a person a foreign language. Which is exactly the new approach analysts are taking to the subject.

Artificial Intelligence, a computer subject everybody was talking about in the eighties, was supposed to bring answers to "non-linear" problems like language translation. So far it didn't. Even if it does, in the near future, computers will not be able to provide translations with the quality of that of a human being. A writer (a translator is a writer, agreed?) has a style, a reflection of his personality and his culture. What personality, what culture does a computer have?

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

By Mohammad A. Shuqair

TANTALISING FACTS

- In 1894 there were only four automobiles in the United States.
- It is impossible to sneeze when both eyes are open.
- Voltaire drank seventy cups of coffee every day.
- The Irish language is the most difficult language to speak.
- For no apparent reason, men get appendicitis more often than women.
- A great percentage of British women have thumb swelling and inflammation when they reach the age of forty.

LET'S CHAT IN ARABIC

- I have no money. Can you lend me some?
Laysa laday fulus. Hal tastati? an takridani baadan min'ha?
- Sorry, I think one dinar won't do.
Assif, azoanno anna dinaran wahidan la yakfi.
- Hussein rarely visits you, doesn't he?
Kallama yazoorka Hussein, alyasa kazalik?
- He's always busy.
Howa da'imam mashghool.
- Did you see your uncle?
Hal ra'ayta ammak?
- We were at his house yesterday.
Konna fee baitihi am.
- I want two dollars and a half, please.
Oreed dolarain wa nisf, law samaht.
- I'm bankrupt.
Ana mufliis.
- How many books do you have?
Kam kitaban ma'aka?
- I've five books and a pen.
Indi khamasat kotob wa kalam.
- What do you eat in the morning?
Maza ta'kol fi-sabah?
- I eat some bread, butter and jam.
Aakol baadan minal khobz, waz-zubda wal-murabba.
- Are these eggs fresh?
Hal hazal bayd tazij?
- We don't sell bad eggs.
Nahnu la nabi baydan fasidan.

JOKES

- What's the difference between a hill and a pill?
— One goes up and the other goes down.
- What are the largest ants in the world?
— Eleph-ants.

- Doctor: How's your husband's lumbago?
Wife: Not too good. I rubbed his back with whisky like you told me to and he broke his neck trying to lick it off!

- Three biscuits were crossing the road when the first one was knocked down and then a second was knocked down. What did the third biscuit say as he reached the pavement in safety?
— Crumbs!

- Postman: Is this letter for you, sir? The name is all smudged.
Man: No, my name is Allsop.

- How do you do?
— Do what?

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

1. What is the origin of the Marathon?
2. Who was known as "the king over the water"?
3. Why don't men have tails?
4. What is an accentor? A briard?
5. Which European language has the largest vocabulary?

YOUR DREAMS INTERPRETED

- BOOKS: You can anticipate slow but steady progress and a calm pleasant life ahead if books were the main feature of your dream.

- DOVE: White doves signify happy domestic affairs and/or a peaceful solution to any agreements which may be troubling you. A flock of doves predicts sudden travel or the return of an old friend from a distance. The cooing of doves promises reciprocal love, but the voice of a turtledove heralds some approaching sadness.

- EXAMINATION: The classic daddy of obstacle dreams with a classic simplicity of meaning. If you failed the examination, the dream is telling you that your ambitions are beyond your ability and you would benefit from a change of goal. However, if you passed the exam easily or it presented no major problem to you, it predicts comfortable achievement of all your hopes.

(1) FIND THE WORD

Can you supply letters in the places indicated by the 'X' so that the same seven-lettered word may be read twelve times?

D	X	X	X	X	X	D
X	X				X	X
X		X		X		X
X			X			X
X	X			X		X
X	X				X	X
D	X	X	X	X	X	D

(2) MISSING LETTERS

By inserting the letter G thirteen times it is possible to make the following collection of letters into a reasonable sentence. What is this sentence?

ARIMACINAROYLEISLE
SSARAVATINTHANAILI
NIOLO

(3) Which of these is the odd one out?

Cove, point, gulf, bay, bight, inlet?

(4) Can you think of a single-word anagram of MONDAY?

Water, water nowhere

By E. Yaghi

One night on April 16, just before the break of dawn, near a mountain circle, a water pipe which serviced a four storey building, broke. The precious liquid gushed out and shot up higher than a camel's eye almost touching the electrical wires hanging above like a geyser. Though the landlord of the property concerned whose line it was that broke promptly notified the proper water authorities, no one came to shut off the flow of water until the next day and meanwhile, the pipe which griddled a busy street, continued to spurt water into the air to the disturbance of drivers and pedestrians alike.

Finally, those alert water employees, after continuous phone calls from the concerned landlord, sent a group of workers out to fix the problem pipe. Happily, the landlord rushed out to greet the labourers and in his glee, bought soft drinks for them all. Little did he realise that the pipe wasn't being fixed after all, but being cut off forever. Later that night when he returned to the workers, he asked them exactly why they seemed to be severing the line instead of mending it. He was assured: "Don't worry, sir, although we're tying off this line, we are going to install a new one for you up the street."

Slightly cynical, the landlord returned to his home a bit disgruntled and waited. Then he waited some more and waited and waited and waited for the water authority to come and put for him a line to replace the one that they had so easily shut. Yet not wanting to remain idle about the issue, he tried on many occasions to contact the Water Department. Often, their line was busy, and sometimes, no one answered at all in spite of the fact that the department is open 24 hours, day and night. On frequent occasions, an employee would say without bothering or waiting to hear the landlord's address, "sure, we'll have someone out there in an hour or so," just to get rid of him.

Of course, no one came, ever. The old line remained severed and no new supply of water was issued, denying four floors or renters and the landlord and his family any means of securing water that was due them not only as taxpayers but as citizens of a country that owes its existence to the value of its people. The line had been a bother for some time. Initially, it was dug too close beneath the surface of the street and because it was situated in an area of constant traffic, the line broke every so often. Workers would be sent out to repair the damage only to have the same problem occur again and

again. Hence, when the line was severed, it solved the problem of water leakage but neglected all those who depended on the supply. It is sort of like saying, "the operation was a success, but the patient died!"

It's not a pretty picture to paint about those who are employed at the Water Department, but unfortunately, it's true. After promises of immediate supply, the denied victims of a secured water line waited and waited some more. Where is the water man who looks after his sheep? Why, he is under the haystack, the fast asleep! The cow's in the meadow, the sheep's in the corn and the ones who desperately need water are all forlorn.

One week later, after many promises and even after this fantastic statement by one employee who had the nerve to declare, "oh, are you the one that the new line was being dug for? (This was a different line that the landlord had nothing at all to do with) You could be jailed for this!"

Whereas the landlord articulated as clearly as his nerves would allow: "Will you please let me get a word in? First of all, I have nothing to do with this line you were digging further up the street and that's your business to know who you are putting a line for. Second of all, my line was cut off by your department and I've not had water since April 17. I have four floors of renters who have had no water at all for a week. The severance of the line is not my fault but yours because in the first place, it was not placed properly in the street. The entire affair is one of mismanagement, disorganisation and employees who care nothing about the people they are paid to serve."

Within this week without water, temperatures soared to 36 degrees. Wild winds blew red dirt which covered the city. The landlord's stairs were blanketed with a thick layer of dirt. There was no water at all and some small children, one a baby, depend on a supply of the essence of life nowhere to be found.

But even in true stories which prove stranger than fiction, miracles can happen so at 12 midnight not long after this article was begun, some labourers appeared on the scene to re-dig a hole in the street where the landlord's line had been amputated and re-connected his old line back to him once again. There remains a deep scar cutting across the street where cars have to slow down to pass over, causing traffic congestion, but at least there is one building of occupants who dare not complain for at last they have water once again.

Making waves: Radio DJs stir debate over on-air antics

NEW YORK (AP) — A St. Louis radio station airs phone messages believed to be a TV weatherman talking about a love affair. A day later, he dies in a fiery plane crash that appears to be a suicide.

A Chicago disc jockey suggests to listeners that a TV anchorwoman — and recent widow — is pregnant by a Chicago Bulls player. A judge refuses to dismiss her defamation lawsuit.

A Texas radio station announces it has hidden money in Fort Worth's library. Hundreds storm the building, tearing out pages, tossing books on the floor.

Responsible radio? At a time when New York disc jockey Howard Stern wins fame, fortune and great ratings with outrageous comments about sex and other taboo subjects, the antics of lesser-known disc jockeys are raising questions, too, about what can — and should be uttered on public airwaves.

In cases such as the recent library ransacking, it's simply a promotion gone amok. In instances such as last month's tragedy in St. Louis, it's a trickier issue — the privacy rights of public personalities.

"It's really difficult because a public figure will take all the positive publicity they can get, take you into their homes, show you their furniture and tell you their hobbies, but when they do something wrong, they want to slam the door," argues Bill Viands, general manager at WKBO in St. Louis, which aired the weatherman's tape. "You can't have it both ways."

TV tabloid journalism, Viands says, also has altered the landscape because "the public has come to expect... the intrusive type of coverage on people."

Jim Hoyt, a broadcast journalism professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, agrees that the rules have changed.

"Stations are attempting to push the kind of general accepted format further," he said. "I think the stations may be playing with fire."

One questionable incident arose on March 22 when WKBO morning drive DJs Steve Shannon and D.C. Chymes interviewed a woman named Donna Henry. She had secured a protective court order, claiming St. Louis TV weatherman Bob Richards was harassing her after she broke off an affair.

Those charges, denied by Mr. Richards, were reported in the news media. She then played for the DJs answering machine tapes, one in which a man she identified as the married Richards declared his love for her. Shannon and Chymes repeatedly said she was making allegations; Mr. Richards didn't accept station offers to respond.

Mr. Chymes said he wouldn't have handled the interview differently, but added that "if we were to know that we could have done anything or not done anything, we would have — but nobody knew that."

In Chicago, an \$8 million lawsuit is pending against WBBM-FM's Joe Bohannon, who is accused of

broadcasting a false rumour last year about the paternity of the unborn child of Joan Esposito, a news anchor for WMAQ-TV.

Howard Pearl, Ms. Esposito's attorney, said the jockey later signed an affidavit stating he knew it was a baseless rumour. A judge in February refused to dismiss the case.

While those cases involved public personalities, DJs have angered others with promotions such as the Fort Worth incident, where KYNG-FM listeners were told money was hidden in the library stacks.

Programme director Dan Parman said the intent was to encourage reading by offering \$100, but library spokeswoman Martha Anderson said some of the 800 people who stormed the building said they heard it was up to \$10,000.

About 100 books were destroyed and thousands others tossed about in the feverish hunt for dollars, Mrs. Anderson said. The station has promised to make repairs, including paying for the damaged books and donating \$10,000 for other materials.

The Federal Communications Commission in 1992 addressed more dangerous pranks, approving a \$25,000 fine for a hoax involving a crime or catastrophe. A fake report of a nuclear attack by St. Louis radio station during the Gulf War helped prompt the ruling.

has taken notice of tuna eyeballs," said Michio Motomura, president of gourmet book publisher Nihon Shokuhin Shuppansha.

"But personally I've always eaten the eyeballs of any fish first. It's the tastiest part," the publisher said.

Of the five Japanese companies processing and selling tuna eyeballs, Maruni Suisan, a specialist tunafish company, said it helped pioneer the new food fad.

"But I hadn't realised how interested people would be in tuna eyeballs till these reports came out," said Akira Nimura, the company's canning department chief.

Maruni Suisan boils the eyeballs in soy sauce and preserves them whole, said Mr. Nimura. "Customers would complain if they opened the tin and what they saw didn't look like eyeballs."

At market, the raw product sells for 20 to 30 yen (\$2 to \$3) apiece. Once tinned and set in the can alongside caviar and other goods, the same eyeballs fetch nearly 1,500 yen (\$15).

Mr. Nimura estimates that on average only 10,000 big-eyed tunafish — those with the most prominent orbs — go on the market each month at Tokyo's wholesale fish market.

"Unfortunately, eyeballs have only one pair each," he adds.



Depardieu biography recounts actor's rise from hardship

By Marilyn August
The Associated Press

PARIS—Born to an illiterate drunk and a discontented woman who tried to abort him with a knitting needle, Gerard Depardieu overcame neglect, poverty and a humiliating speech impediment to become one of France's greatest film stars.

A bearlike man with boundless energy, Depardieu emerges in a new biography as a survivor, an endearingly complex man who grabbed misfortune and crafted it into genius. "Depardieu" is a collaborative biography by Paul Chutkow.

"Gerard cooperated fully, but he did not have the right of approval and he did not earn a cent," Mr. Chutkow said in a telephone interview. "I had carte blanche. He never interfered and only read the manuscript once it was completed."

The two spent hundreds of hours together at Depardieu's home outside Paris and on location in exotic spots across the globe.

Mr. Chutkow, a former

correspondent for the Associated Press who spent 12 years in Paris, interviewed dozens of family members, close friends, film directors, fellow actors — even Dr. Alfred Tomatis, who diagnosed a severe hearing problem and helped Depardieu regain language skills after they broke down.

Mr. Chutkow presents Depardieu as multifaceted man: A gifted actor with 90 films to his credit since 1971; a 250-pound (112-kilogramme) gastronome who selects his own free-range chickens live on the farm; a wine lover who produces his own vintage.

The book's publication here in French in early March was a major event, despite a lukewarm reception from some critics.

"This is not a biography for movie-lovers," wrote Jerome Garcin in the weekly *Evenement Du Jeudi*.

"It does not satisfy our curiosity about Depardieu's formative relationships with people like (Marguerite) Duras, (Maurice) Pialat, Bertrand (Bliez), (Claude) Berri. The author merely wanted to hold



Gerard Depardieu

up a mirror in front of Depardieu, an actor he admires and who doesn't much like himself, so he can

see himself, head high, halfway through his fabulous life. The star who symbolises

French cinema was weaned on American culture in Chateauroux, a backwater town in central France that was still reeling from Nazi occupation, rationing and economic depression when Depardieu was born there in 1949.

In 1951, Chateauroux became home to a NATO base that later swelled to accommodate 12,000 GIs and their families. Depardieu chewed juicy fruit gum, beebopped to the rhythms of Elvis Presley and Chubby Checker, snacked on burgers and milkshakes, and adopted James Dean and Marlon Brando as heroes.

He also brushed with delinquency — trafficking in ration cards and befriending young prostitutes working the base.

Things at home were grim. Gerard's father, Dede, was a heavy-drinking ironworker who was often unemployed. Lilette, his mother, dreamed about travelling to exotic places and blamed Gerard, her third child, for clipping her wings.

They were not evil people, just ignorant, Mr.

Chutkow writes.

"Their family communication was generally a chaotic rumble of grunts, aborted thoughts, stifled feelings and yelling," Mr. Chutkow writes.

Once the angry shouting subsided, the tension remained. The house, Depardieu later said, was ruled by "the law of silence."

He retreated into a protective shell and ended up tongue-tied by the age of 6 — just about the time Lilette confessed she never wanted him in the first place. One day, in a fit of rage, she told him she had tried to end the pregnancy with a knitting needle.

"That was the defining shock of his childhood," Mr. Chutkow said. "But he recovers from everything and turns it into emotional resources for his craft. That's his brilliance."

Depardieu told Mr. Chutkow he had nightmares for years about knitting needles, concluding that, "if I can survive those knitting needles, I can survive anything."

Depardieu was happy that the book rectified misconceptions about his childhood.

hood.

"I was really a solitary child... But I never said I was unhappy," he was quoted as saying in the weekly *Evenement Du Jeudi*. "Just the opposite, I was very lucky to be born into a poor, illiterate and medieval family because there were no taboos. I was born free, free to invent who I wanted to be."

"Depardieu" devotes 34 pages to the actor's dispute with *Time* magazine in 1991 over his alleged confession that he went along on a gang rape at age 9.

Mr. Chutkow obtained a transcript of the original French interview and compared it to the English translation upon which the *Time* article was based.

His conclusion: Depardieu's quotes were taken out of context, edited and spliced together to make the actor appear to confess to rape.

"The magazine added phrases that he didn't say," Mr. Chutkow said. "When you listen to the tape, it's quite clear that he's dismissing earlier press reports as exaggerated. He says, 'yes, I've been painted as some-

one who is an alcoholic. But do I have the head of an alcoholic? Yes, someone wrote I once took a gun.' He's not admitting to anything but the fact that he knows this stuff has been written about him."

Mr. Chutkow said the incident, which may have cost the actor an Academy Award for his starring role in *Cyrano De Bergerac*, deeply wounded him and tarnished his reputation in the United States. Despite resounding support from the French film industry, Depardieu was disconsolate for weeks.

But he recovered to triumph in *Tous Les Matins Du Monde* (All The Mornings Of The World). He also appeared in Christopher Columbus: 1492, his second English-language success after *Green Card*. The movie received lukewarm to unfavourable reviews.

As Mr. Chutkow puts it, Depardieu bounced back "the way a vine that has been pruned will grow back even fuller."

France's biggest hit — will it play in peoria?

By Barbara Novovitch
Reuter

NEW YORK — Claude Berri's epic retelling of an Emile Zola classic about 19th century coalminers outlived even *Jurassic Park* at cinemas in France last year, but the French filmmaker has more down-to-earth expectations for his latest film in the United States.

Germinal, starring Gerard Depardieu, Miou Miou and Renaud — a protest singer who to French youth is a combination of Bruce Springsteen/Bob Dylan — was seen by well over six million people last year in France.

The film also inspired \$9.6 million sales of the Zola novel in paperback. Berri told Reuters in New York. The book's title, like the film, refers to germination and rebirth.

But Berri said he did not anticipate that sort of phenomenal success for his film in the United States, even though it generally has had a good critical reception and positive word-of-mouth.

"I'm a realist," said Berri, puffing nervously on a Lucky Strike cigarette. "I think if people go to see the film, they will like it. But if they get the im-

pression from the press that it's too difficult, perhaps they won't go. We have the impression now that people like to go (to the movies) for entertainment, comedies, easy things. And they don't like films that make them ask questions."

Germinal, at \$30 million the most expensive French production ever, is now playing in New York, Chicago and Los Angeles and will roll out slowly across the United States, according to its distributors, Sony Pictures Classics. It has already grossed about \$50,000 at just three theatres.

A New York Times critic called the film, which vividly portrays the exploitation of coalminers by wealthy mine owners and presages the birth of unions and communism in France, "one of the most desperately romantic films ever made."

"Difficult as it is to think of a coal-mining drama as sheer escapism, *Germinal* is most tempting for its vision of moral purity," wrote Janet Maslin.

"A film like *Germinal* is rare," said Berri. "There's not only the challenge of ideas, there's also the spectacle, the reconstitution of history, the love story... This is a very emo-

tional, very moving film and at the end of it people will want to discuss it, to discuss what happened at the end of the 19th century and what happens now."

Berri, best known to American audiences for *Jean De Florette* and *Manon Of The Spring* (1986), said differing postwar experiences with communism, for example, would influence sympathies in the U.S.

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and France for Zola's story.

Socialist or Communist ideas were anathema in the United States after World War II while in France the Communist Party was an integral and respected part of government.

Berri dedicated *Germinal* to his father, a furrier "who always talked to me about the world's injustice" and who voted Communist after

the war.

The hulking French everyman, Depardieu, plays the leader of the French miners and Miou Miou his courageous wife. Renaud is the stranger who gets a job at the mine and a room with the couple and incites the workers to pursue a strike against the mine owners that ends tragically. Thousands of peasants and ex-miners from northern

France are extras in the film.

Zola, perhaps most famous in the United States for his *J'accuse* defence of the Jewish officer in the Dreyfus affair, wrote the story of *Germinal* after eight days spent in the coal mines of northern France in 1884, taking copious notes that remain the most accurate sociological and historical document on the country's mines of that period.

At a New York screening of the film to benefit Amnesty International, the president of the human rights group called Zola "a one-man Amnesty International of a century ago."

Germinal was nominated for 12 Cesars — the French equivalent of Academy Awards — and won two, for Best Cinematography and Best Costumes.

Berri seemed unconcerned about not winning a Cesar as Best Director. Like U.S. director Steven Spielberg, who was snubbed repeatedly by the Academy Awards before winning this year with *Schindler's List*, Berri has been nominated four times as Best Director but has not yet won the prize.

Michael Barker of Sony Pictures Classics, distributors of *Germinal*, said in a telephone interview that good foreign films and films with more serious topics have a wide audience in the United States but sometimes take longer to find it.

"There's always been an audience out there that wants more for their movie-going experience," said Mr. Barker. "If you've got a quality picture the audience is going to go see it."



Claude Berri

In addition, major Hollywood studios are now making movies that a few years ago would have been called art movies, he said — *Remains Of The Day*, *The Joy Luck Club*, *Schindler's List*.

"That can only help the business that we're in because it gives the theatres more solid programming throughout the year," Mr. Barker said.

Success for Soundgarden has its bittersweet moments

By Dean Goodman
Reuter

LOS ANGELES — Seattle grunge rockers Soundgarden may finally be enjoying commercial recognition after years as uncompromising heroes of the underground. But the success has its downside too.

Their latest album *Superunknown* entered the U.S. album charts at number one last month, accomplishing the same rare feat as recent offerings from hometown bands like Pearl Jam, Nirvana and Alice In Chains.

Yet it irks the quartet, that, as the commercial gap narrows between them and these bands, it widens in relation to other contemporaries like *Screaming Trees* and *Melvins*.

"These are the bands that have really worked hard and have shown their influence on a lot of bands across Seattle and across the country," Soundgarden guitarist Kim Thayil told Reuters in a recent interview.

Thayil considers the Melvins, a trio best known for its thunderous Black Sabbath-type riffs, as probably the most influential Seattle band. It riles him that second-rate bands are selling millions of records by cashing in on the buzz that the Melvins inadvertently helped generate.

No such allegations can be made about Soundgarden though. Formed in 1984 and named after the Sound Garden pipe sculpture on that Pacific northwest town's Sand Point, the band made several independent records before releasing its major label debut *Louder Than Love* on AM Records in 1989.

That album, featuring the song *Big Dumb Sex* that Guns N' Roses covered on their recent punk tribute album, peaked at 109. Bad-motortrigger from 1991, peaked at 39 and eventually went platinum in the U.S.

Although *Superunknown*'s number one showing was hardly a surprise given the grunge explosion, it's very rare to hear the words "Soundgarden" and "Commercial" uttered in the same breath. The band's relentlessly dense music is flavoured by the death-obsessed lyrics of singer/guitarist Chris Cornell.

Several weeks ago, Nirvana lead singer Kurt Cobain was found dead in his garage, an apparent suicide. "Sure, we could write a Shiny Happy People-type song if we wanted people with cowboy hats to be in

our audience," says Thayil.

Thayil, a gentle bearded giant with a philosophy degree and an evil chuckle, is the "soul" of Soundgarden. He eschews the various side projects that the rest of the band, which is rounded out by drummer Matt Cameron and bassist Ben Shepherd, have indulged themselves in.

"I think if I were to write 10 songs for a separate album, it's quite likely they'd be better as Soundgarden songs. Soundgarden parallels the vision that I would have for writing. It's been a tradition as co-founder and originally primary songwriter," he says.

Back to the subject of writing happy songs, slumped next to Thayil and blowing smoke rings, Chris Cornell adds: "Usually when I write songs like that, it's songs for my dogs — they're kinda happy to be alive and just love you to death."

Suffice to say the album, bookended by the songs *Let Me Down* and *Like Suicide*, has not been played for them.

Cornell, a dashing figure whose lyrics favour the metaphorical, shies away from ascribing particular themes to the album. He says the 15-song, 70-minute effort, completed in November, took a longer than usual five months to record.

"What was going through our heads most of the time was: Let's make another record. Whatever ideas come out of the record, whatever attitudes, feelings or philosophies, it's up to the listener to decide."

He says that nothing makes him feel better writing a song that he likes, and then nothing makes him feel worse when three days later he realises that song is horrible.

In line with his eternal reluctance to be pinned down, he says the album's title track is a reaction to categorisation: "Just because you don't see it as one thing, doesn't make it necessarily what you do see it as."

For the record, Soundgarden professes to have no opinion on the current state of the Seattle scene.

"We're just gonna do what we do, and do as well as we can. And whatever ship that everyone's jumping onto floats away or sinks — that's their business. We're not on that ship," says Thayil.

Adds Cornell: "We have our own ship. We have our own rats."

Demand soars for paintings by contemporary Vietnamese artists

By Tom Kirkwood
Reuter

HO CHI MINH CITY, Vietnam — Residents of Ho Chi Minh City rarely give the tiny shop in Nguyen Du Street a second glance but its goods are fast becoming some of Vietnam's most sought-after commodities.

Since Nguyen Thi Lan Huong opened Gallery Saigon for business a year ago, a steady stream of tourists, foreign businessmen and a few well-travelled dealers have flocked to it searching for paintings by contemporary Vietnamese artists.

No longer now are the artworks hanging on the shop's walls the dirt-cheap bargains they used to be. "In 1991, I sold two Phai's for \$100 each. I must have been mad. Last month one Phai I sold, a beautiful one, went for \$10,000," said Ms. Huong.

She was talking about works by the late Bui Xuan Phai, one of the most sought after masters of

Vietnamese contemporary art, some of whose paintings hang in her simple gallery.

The five-figure sum for the Phai, paid by a Hong Kong-based American banker, reflects the emergence of Vietnamese art in the international marketplace, she said.

Ms. Huong, 27, realised the potential of Vietnamese art in 1991, when she opened her first gallery with a friend.

"I had to persuade him to sell his car first," she recalls. "We opened on Jan. 15, 1991 and became the third gallery in Saigon."

Driving over a rattling wooden bridge across the Saigon River, on the way to visit Nguyen Phan — a lesser known, but fast-rising star of the Vietnamese art scene — Ms. Huong explains how she accumulated her collection.

"The artists, all of them are my friends," she says. "One will call me up and invite me for a drink. Another may invite me for dinner... If they have a

painting to sell, they tell me and I arrange to see it.

"If I like it I will buy it. If not, I may give them some money until they have a painting I want to buy."

Ms. Huong's business tactics have so far proved successful and her index of customers is comprehensive. Among a surprisingly long list of buyers are, for example, an attorney from Chicago, a company president from New York, an art consultant from Chicago, antique dealers from Hong Kong, and even a South Korean toymaker.

Ms. Huong opened her Gallery Saigon independently last year, raising the \$4,000 she needed to start up by selling her motorbike and some paintings from her first gallery, as well as a \$1,500 commission on a land deal.

She is also learning Japanese at night school, tapping into a pool of energy released by Vietnam's highly successful Doi Moi (renovation) economic policy, begun in 1986.

An hour's drive from

Gallery Saigon, the house of 46-year-old artist Nguyen Phan is in Ho Chi Minh City's Section 8, a dilapidated suburb of small houses interspersed by riots of bougainvillea and frangipani trees.

Despite the rundown surroundings, behind plain concrete walls lies a dream house — a thick clump of shady trees emerges from a dark pond and shades a church-shaped house that, like Phan's art, is larger-than-life.

A squat man with long hair and wiry philosopher's beard, Phan had a particularly difficult time after the Communist government came to power in 1976. For 12 years after the war he worked as a part-time fisherman and cyclo driver. He was denied official employment and forbidden to paint.

But paint he did — at night, in secret, hiding his paintings in the roof of his simple reed hut. "Many paintings were spoiled when it rained," he said with a shrug.

In 1988, he was rehabilitated — "because of Doi Moi," he explained, without elaborating.

The size of his new house reflects the success he has enjoyed since his rehabilitation. Huge walls surrounding open-plan living spaces are hung with the large, dreamy works that are his trademark.

Phan's work, like that of many contemporary Vietnamese artists is quickly developing an international following. His work appeared in a 1991 collection of Vietnamese art shown by Hong Kong's Plum Blossoms Gallery, and more recently a visiting Australian collector bought 10 of the artist's paintings after a visit to his home.

While part of the attraction of Vietnamese art has been its value for money, a burgeoning demand is pushing up prices.

Ho Chi Minh City's many gift shops now all have their own selections of local art. Not all of which however is coveted by international art dealers.

When heart disease strikes, pessimism can be a killer

By Daniel Q. Haney
The Associated Press

BOSTON — A healthy outlook helps heal the heart, scientists say in a major study that found pessimism can be a killer.

The study identified optimism as a powerful predictor of who will live and who will die after the diagnosis of heart disease. It is the latest in a series of recent reports showing that people's emotions and friendships play a critical role in recovery.

"Optimism is a good thing," Dr. Daniel Mark said. "When people give up and feel they are not going to make it, it's usually a self-fulfilling prophecy."

Dr. Mark, a heart specialist at Duke University, based his findings on a follow-up on 1,719 men and women who had undergone heart catheterization, a common procedure used to check the arteries for clogging. He outlined the results at a meeting of the Society of Behavioural Medicine.

The patients typically underwent the test because of chest pain, and all had heart disease. When interviewed, 14 per cent said they doubted they would recover enough to resume their daily routines.

After one year, 12 per cent of these pessimists had died, compared with 5 per cent of those who were optimistic about getting better.

Even when the severity of people's conditions was taken into account, outlook was a crucial factor in survival. In fact, optimism often seemed to have bearing on how sick people

were. Some of those with very mild heart disease had the grimmest views of their prospects.

"The mind is a tremendous tool or weapon, depending on your point of view," Dr. Mark said.

In his study, pessimism appeared to be even more damaging to recovery than depression, which is also shown to be bad for heart patients.

Dr. Nancy Frasure-Smith of the Montreal Heart Institute presented follow-up

data on the effect of negative emotions on 222 patients, most of them in their 60s, who were recovering from heart attacks.

They were given a psychological test that measures feelings of sadness and depression. Those who scored high on this were eight times more likely than more upbeat folks to die during the following 18 months. Feeling anxious tripled the risk, as did holding in anger.

Less clear, however, is what to do about these black moods in heart patients.

"We don't know how to change negative emotions," Dr. Frasure-Smith said. "And if we try to intervene, we don't know if we will change prognosis."

Other factors that appear to have an effect on heart disease survival include feeling hostile, being unmarried and having no one at home to talk to.

Even personality types appear to be linked. Dr. Larry Gorkin of the Institute for Behavioural Medicine found, for instance,

that hard-driven type A people are more likely to suffer initial heart attacks. But laid-back type Bs are more apt to die once heart disease becomes apparent.

It's possible, he said, that "type As take it as a wake up call. They work more diligently in cardiac rehabilitation than do type Bs."

Dr. Peter G. Kaufman, chief of behavioural medicine at the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, said the accumulating evidence fits together well.

"All of this work is pointing in the same direction, which is a tremendous thing," he said.

Just how emotions harm the heart is still unclear. Heart attacks usually occur when a bit of fatty buildup, called plaque, breaks in a heart artery. A blood clot sticks to this wound, plugging the artery and choking off the heart's oxygen supply.

Researchers speculate that emotions may increase levels of hormones that put strain on the artery walls or make the blood more likely to clot.

Transgenic animals offer brave new world in healthcare

By Ben Hirschler
Reuters

just outside Edinburgh the LONDON — On a farm outside Edinburgh the lambing season is in full swing.

But these are no ordinary lambs. Hidden in their chromosomes is an extra gene which means they will produce a valuable drug in their milk.

They are at the forefront of a new kind of farming taking shape on both sides of the Atlantic, aimed at harvesting drugs or organs for transplant from genetically-engineered animals.

The U.S. and European companies involved believe they are on the brink of a billion-dollar industry.

The idea of using "transgenic" animals has recently received a significant boost from advances in breeding successive generations.

Last month, a company in Cambridge, England, said it had produced a litter of pigs whose genetic make-up had been altered to allow their organs to be transplanted into people.

The first such transplants could take place within three years, the company, Imutran, predicted.

Trials in humans of drugs from animal milk could start even sooner. Pharmaceutical Proteins Ltd (PPL), the company which bred the Scottish sheep, says this year's lambs will supply the first sheep-milk drug for clinical tests starting in late 1995 or early 1996.

Alpha-1-Antitrypsin (AAT) is designed to fight lung disorders.

But PPL, which hopes to float its shares later this year, does not have the genetic farmyard to itself.

The U.S. company Genzyme Transgenics, of Framingham, Massachusetts, intends to pip it to the post by getting its goats' milk anti-thrombosis drug Anti-Thrombin-III (AT-III) into clinical trials in 1995.

And Genpharm International of Mountain View, California, has just produced the first progeny from a Dutch biotech bull — opening up the prospect of drug manufacture in cows, which have a milk yield more than 10 times that of goats or sheep.

Taking a slightly different tack, British researchers at the state-backed Roslin Institute have reported progress in breeding a flock of

transgenic chickens capable of producing drugs and vaccines in their eggs.

Technical hurdles remain, including proving that chemicals from farm animals are pure enough for medical use. But proponents argue that transgenic systems have big advantages over the conventional method of producing protein drugs from gene-spliced bacteria, yeasts or mammalian cells grown in fermentation vats.

PPL Managing Director Ron James says his sheep are cheaper and can produce certain complex therapeutic proteins which a factory could never do economically.

Genzyme Transgenics sees a market in excess of \$1 billion a year for drugs from-milk by early next century.

"I think there could be dozens of products by 2002 or 2003 each with revenues in the tens of millions and potentially hundreds of millions of dollars," said President James Geraghty.

His company alone is working on a range of major diseases including cancer, multiple sclerosis, stroke and diabetes.

Although the widespread

use of pig kidneys or hearts looks unlikely until well into the 21st century, transgenic organ transplants could also be a substantial market.

The U.S. cross-species concern DNX estimates that if such transplants prove safe and effective, more than 100,000 patients worldwide could receive new pig organs each year. Heart transplants are likely to be the least troublesome since there are fewer rejection problems in this area.

Major drug companies are dipping a cautious toe in the water. "They are just starting to believe," said Mr. Geraghty.

Germany's Bayer is working with PPL on its AAT product while Sumitomo of Japan is working with Genzyme on AT-III and Imutran is backed by Swiss giant Sandoz.

A number of other majors are collaborating on other projects on an undisclosed basis, company executives say.

Not everyone is thrilled by the new breed of livestock down on the farm, however.

The British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection said it was "extremely con-

cerned about the use of genetically altered animals and said the practice caused the animals great suffering for dubious medical benefit."

The transgenic companies insist that this is not so. While some early transgenic animals were a disaster — such as the Beltsville Pig, named after the United

States laboratory which developed an animal so heavy it could not support itself — today's animals are fit and healthy, they argue.

"My sheep are perfectly healthy, normal sheep that get treated in general a great deal better than most sheep kept for farming purposes," said PPL's James.

Malaria vaccine shows promise in initial human trials

By Jim Fuller

WASHINGTON — Researchers report that a new malaria vaccine being tested in Africa stimulates the body's immune system to fight the dreaded disease without causing harmful side effects.

The scientists, in an article to be published in the Feb. 8 issue of the British medical journal *Vaccine*, say the success of the initial trials has paved the way for the final phase of human tests now underway in the Kilombero district, Tanzania. If these tests are successful, scientists hope that an effective malaria vaccine could be available for widespread use by 1998.

There is currently no effective vaccine to prevent malaria, which strikes between 300 million and 500 million people a year and annually kills up to one million children in Africa, where it is the most widespread.

Dr. Tore Godal, director of the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR), said the initial trials of the vaccine, called "SPf66," show that it is safe for children and induces a strong immune system response.

The TDR is funded mainly by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank and the World Health Organisation.

"The Tanzania test demonstrates that we are over half way to developing the first ever effective malaria vaccine," Dr. Godal says. "There are still big scientific hurdles to overcome, but we can push the search through to a conclusion as long as the flow of research funds continues in these difficult economic times."

"Malaria is killing millions in Africa and threatening economic development in every continent," says Tim Rothermel, director of UNDP's Division for Global and Interregional Programmes. "For the first time, we are putting the long years of vaccine development to the test in large-scale trials in Africa."

The researchers report that results from the final phase of human trials, which involve more than 600 children in Kilombero, should be available by next October. These tests will tell scientists whether the experimental vaccine really protects children by reducing the number and severity

of malarial attacks.

"If the vaccine allows us to cut the rate of malaria attacks in half, and if that can be translated directly into a halving of death rates, success in the trial would offer hope of saving up to 500,000 African children's lives each year," Dr. Godal says.

Dr. Godal adds that the vaccine is getting a severe test in Kilombero, where, during the rainy season a person can suffer as many as 25 bites a night from malaria-infected mosquitoes.

The widespread infection from malaria that exists throughout Africa causes little trouble to adults, who develop immunity after repeated exposure. But the disease is a killer in young, non-immune or only semi-immune children.

The SPf66 vaccine is also being tested in Gambia and Thailand, where results are expected in 1995. Two further trials are underway in Colombia.

The vaccine was first tested on monkeys, and then on humans in Colombia, where it achieved a 22- to 77-per cent reduction in malarial attacks, with the greatest reduction in the young and very old.

SPf66, developed by Colombian scientist Manuel Patarroyo, is a combination of synthetic peptides that causes the body's immune system to attack the malaria parasite when it begins to spread in the bloodstream. Malaria is caused by a tiny parasite carried by female mosquitoes.

Doctors currently fight malaria with a small arsenal of drugs. But strains of malaria found in many parts of Africa have developed a resistance to the front-line drug used to fight the disease, called chloroquine.

Insecticides have also been used to kill malaria-carrying mosquitoes, but such methods have not been practical or cost-effective across much of Africa or in regions of Latin America and Asia.

Medical officials express concern that the fight against malaria may be jeopardised by budget cuts in the United States and other countries. They say private companies are not interested in funding the development of a malaria vaccine, which would not be expected to provide a profitable return on investment since it is needed mainly in very poor countries — U.S. Information Agency.

ANSWERS

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

1. The Marathon is a long, gruelling race which traditionally closes the Olympic events. It is taken from the amazing achievement of the Greek runner Pheidippides, who ran over twenty-six miles in four hours, taking news to Athens of the Persians' defeat at the Battle of Marathon in 490 B.C.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

2. James II, after he was forced to flee to France, with the Old Pretender, his son James III, and his grandsons, Charles Edward Stuart. When their Jacobite followers were asked to drink the loyal toast to the king, they passed their glasses first over a bowl of water before drinking, thus drinking not to George, but "the king over the water."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

3. All species of animals, including man, of course, have developed very gradually over millions and millions of years. In this way, each animal strengthens and improves those parts of its body which are particularly useful, and the various parts adopted. This evolution happens very, very slowly, and changes can only be seen over numerous generations. In four-legged animals, or quadrupeds as they are called, the tail is very important for balance, and in many cases it is used almost as another limb, for instance when monkeys swing through the trees. Man, however, walks on two legs — he is called a biped — and he does not need the tail for balance. As a matter of fact, a small very rudimentary "tail" can be found at the base of our spines, but it does not help us at all with balance or movement.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

4. An accorion is a bird, widespread in Europe, and related to the dunnock. A briard is a sheepdog, particularly popular in France.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

5. The English language is spoken by approximately 400 million people, making it the second most-used language in the world, though it is generally agreed that it is the richest of the world's 5,000 languages. Four hundred years ago English was spoken only by the inhabitants of the British Isles, but today more than half the world's magazines, newspapers and scientific journals are printed in English.

In 1606 the language only had a vocabulary of about 30,000 words, whereas modern English is estimated to include some 500,000 words, of which only 200,000 are in current use. An average person today knows and uses at least 10,000 words and can understand a conversation of up to 322 words a minute. In conversation the word "I" is most used, while in writing it is "the".

PUZZLES

(1) FIND THE WORD

D E I F I E D
E E I E E
I I I I
F F F F
I I I I
E E I E E
D E I F I E D

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

DEIFIED, being a palindrome, may be read backwards as well as forwards, so that it appears twelve times in all.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

(2) MISSING LETTERS

The sentence runs as follows:

A GRIMACING GARGOYLE IS LESS AGGRAVATING THAN A GIGGLING GIGOLO.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

(3) POINT:

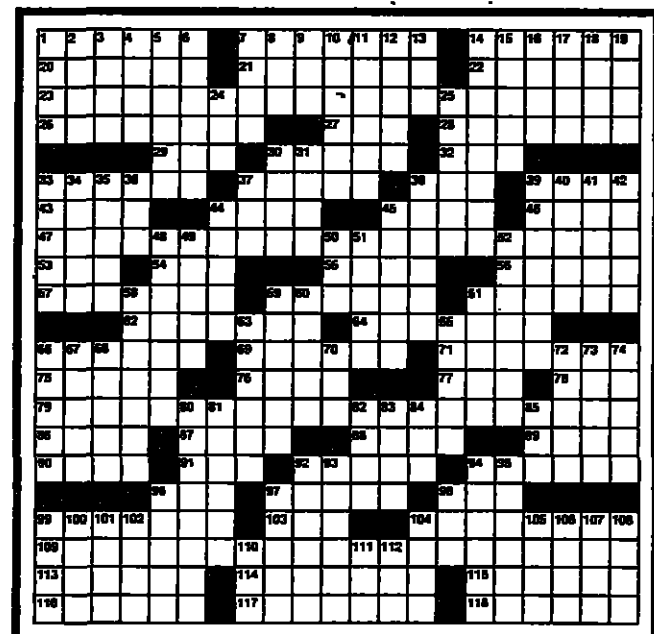
This is the only geographical feature which protrudes seawards. The others all bend the coastline inwards.

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

DEPT DEFS

By Wilson McBeath

ACROSS
1 Robert Grinnah?
7 Has an effect on
14 Something that
serves to unite
20 Intervene
21 Talker?
22 Lion
23 Cliche for a
dancer?
25 Highest rated
only
27 NYC subway syst.
28 Demonstrates
clearly
29 — juvenile
30 Antisocial
32 Spunk
33 Did wrong
37 Geniv, natives
38 Romans
39 Conway and Holt
40 Singer Adams
41 Son of Zeus
45 Buck horns
47 Cliche for a pork
tamer?
52 Article
54 "— in the Family"
55 Author Kingsley
57 Patronize a
friend
58 Fashionable
59 Spears
60 — More difficult
62 Cliché rose
64 Promote
66 Buckingham, for
one
68 Make smooth
71 Learned
75 "A House is
Not —"
76 "Name" to
Cousin
77 Transatlantic tier
78 Party men
79 Cliche for a
blockbuster?
80 Harlequin
81 "Luncheon"
82 Patronize a
friend
83 Spreads
84 "Light Little"
85 Mrs Kennedy
86 — do well
89 It's the limit
92 Kind of "voice"
94 Kuchel, today
98 1101
97 Outlander
98 See eagle
99 "To which is
fixed, — or but?"
("King Henry V")
100 Cliché for a
reporter?
101 "— went up into
the temple"
(Lazarus)
102 "Light Little"
103 "Isabel!"
104 "Isabel!"
105 "Isabel!"
106 "Isabel!"
107 "Isabel!"
108 "Isabel!"
109 "Isabel!"
110 "Isabel!"
111 "Isabel!"
112 "Isabel!"



Last Week's Cryptograms

1. To prove music has charms to soothe a savage breast, bold hunter carries only a CD player and some good discs.
2. When young nurse argued against his snuff-sniffing habit, old duffer's retort was a lot of healthy guff.
3. Possibly the very best address for unthankful pedigree dogs: "Bark" Avenue.
4. Fat man said: "I'm on a seafood diet. If I see food, I eat it."

CRYPTOGRAMS

1. ERJWQBKAEPJL SEZPY CQP EWLHB
DLPPS NQFJS IE LQNK DEER SEZPYBILH
LPILHAPY KAB ERJACLES' BIRHL

—By Earl Ireland

2. LXAIOUP BLOAF YBLMFQ QA GUFFAW
"OBA YOPUVVUFVM" GAGUNTA VOY
YMCB UX LEW TVFA VXX

—By Duane H. McGow

3. WISEGUY ASKD LUYTW NDEEDRDEO:
"HLSFA ESUB EGUYU WIAOSTY—DE'S ESS
HYSMPUP"

—By Ed Haddleton

4. EGGS HSTODN: ABNI NTNUVBOIE NRON
WBORC. LUV WGRGAOIE SOUNDLOGIC.

—By Frank N. Stein

Diagramless 19 x 19, By James Barwick

ACROSS
1 Excavations
6 Thoroughfare
10 Man from Brazil
11 Sp
12 Press
13 Sam the family
14 "Masters of the
Morgue"
15 Sphere
16 Chinese gelatin
17 Art
18 Units of weight
24 Tossed wheels
25 —a-la-
26 Barometer or
thermometer
27 Rounded large
lump
28 Food at a luau
29 Color
30 Before very long
33 Full-on, no-holds-
bar

34 Polish
35 Make happen
36 Drains
37 Unlawful
activity
40 Like a dolly
41 Dr. Jekyll
42 High card
43 Tub washing
45 Get outta here!
49 Scrap of food
50 River in the Alps
51 Highlanders
54 Old Roman poet
56 Ticket and
58 Be a hit with an
audience
59 Actor Andrews
60 Depicted by
drawing
61 Teller
62 Ranch animal
63 Bodily structure:
abbr.
64 M.I.T. word: abbr.
65 Greek letter
66 Coward
67 Crisp cookie
68 Scaleless fish
69 Melody
70 Addict
71 Sleepy
place
72 Wildbeast
73 Pop
74 Success

SOLUTIONS OF
LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE

(Continued from page 1)

rdan awaits arrangement

rael. PLO go all out

Continued from page 1)

✶ added the PLO had also

Riyadh meanwhile Mr. stopper said he had held "ellent" talks with Gulf foreign ministers.

1. *Chlorophyll a* and *Chlorophyll b* were determined by the method of Arar and Collins (1971).

Engement

The Congress Research Centre recently estimated the total value of Saudi arms orders at about \$25 billion.

By Brendan Boyle
Reuter

Ms. Carolus, tipped by some ANC sources as a likely advisor to Mr. Mandela if as

ABOUT TO LEAD: Black South Africans are expected to steer the helm after today's elections. ANC supporters believe they are to lead (AFP photo)

the mainly white University of Stellenbosch, said the ANC had the best brains in

(Continued from page 1)

NATO 'alert' against Serb moves

Mr. Christopher had met here with Mr. Kozyrev on Tuesday.

rights that will outlaw any kind

Development Minister Roelof Meyer to watch Foreign Minister Pik Botha cast his ballot at the Holy Cross Church in Orlando West.

**We pray that God
rests his soul
in eternal peace.**

Rich and poor states face off on development issues

WASHINGTON (R) — Rich and poor countries faced off Wednesday to explore ways to increase assistance to the developing world and to make certain economic reform remains on track.

The meeting of the joint development committee of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank came amid evidence developing countries overall are showing strong vitality with growth rates seen at five per cent annually for the rest of the decade.

World Bank President Lewis Preston, in remarks before the committee, said there had been a phenomenal increase in private flows to developing countries although he warned that this was not necessarily a complete blessing.

"Some of these private flows can be volatile, their scale to some countries may not be maintained and they can place upward pressure on exchange rates and erode competitiveness," he said.

A communiqué issued following the talks said the committee agreed to establish a task force to review the roles being played by the World Bank and the regional development banks with an aim to improving cooperation on assistance.

Issuance of the communiqué ended four days of international meetings that focused on improving the global economy and ways to nurture it, while at

the same examining the plight of least wealthy members of the economic community.

Developing countries have taken the view their weakest members needed more assistance from the industrial countries with particular emphasis on helping the very poor.

In a report Monday the bank said more people are living in poverty around the world than ever but in some ways they are better off than their forebears.

On the whole they are more educated and better protected against disease and living longer than impoverished people in the world's poorest countries did in the past.

The committee, according to what it called the link between population, economic growth, poverty reduction, health and the environment.

It recommended the United Nations Conference on Population meeting in September in Cairo examine the importance of primary school education, improved access to family planning and reductions in maternal and child mortality in developing countries.

The discussion on the state of the developing world came as the United States, Canada and Mexico announced the formation of a multibillion-dollar swap facility designed to help promote North American currency stability.

The facility, a series of credit

lines between the central banks of the three countries, was aimed at bolstering the battered peso and restoring investor confidence after last month's assassination of ruling party candidate Luis Donald Colosio.

But it was also an indication the richest countries and those in the developing world are increasingly fused by the huge and lucrative trade flows between them.

In an unusual joint news conference the central bankers and finance ministers of the three countries announced the formation of a new consultative body, the North American Financial Group, to discuss economic and financial issues.

But even as these measures go forward it is apparent that not everyone in the developing world has been enjoying increased economic vitality.

In a report to the committee the World Bank said world trade is set to increase following the recent Uruguay Round agreement to open trading markets.

Moreover, commodity prices are projected to rise after more than a decade of declines, helping many developing countries which are big producers.

But some countries are likely to benefit more than others from the good times that lie ahead, the bank said.

East Asian nations — stellar performers in recent years — are projected to chalk up substantial gains as their dynamic economies continue to grow.

Other regions will not be as fortunate, the World Bank said. Latin American countries will experience modestly faster growth but will still lag behind the East Asian juggernaut.

The worst performer is again likely to be sub-Saharan Africa where per capita income will grow slowly if at all, the World Bank said.

Foreign investors need strong nerves in Turkey

ISTANBUL (R) — Foreign investors say Turkey is now only for the adventurous, but believe the outlook could improve if economic reforms are pushed through effectively.

They took comfort in news that Turkey was seeking help from the IMF, saying this would anchor Prime Minister Tansu Ciller's austerity measures to fight roaring inflation and deficits.

Three banks have folded since Ms. Ciller launched her programme on April 5, inflation is still heading for three digits and efforts to hold down wages may provoke social unrest.

Foreign traders accordingly predict more upheavals before the benefits of sounder fiscal policies are felt.

"More volatility is expected in short-term but the long-term outlook is better," said an offi-

cial at a leading German bank. Financial turmoil, in which the lira has plunged to 35,500 to the dollar, a fall of 58 per cent this year, has triggered heavy selling of Turkish bonds in international markets.

"Most of the players have suffered so badly in other emerging markets that they are not prepared to take any risk in Turkey," said a trader at a leading U.S. investment bank.

The spread on Turkey's mark bond due to 1996, jumped to 400 basis points over the German benchmark at the beginning of April, from 250 basis points at end-1993. It then recovered to 300 basis points.

The five-year issue in Germany was down to 200 basis points from a high of 280 basis points in April, against its issue spread of 195 basis points.

Dollar, sterling and yen markets witnessed similar swings, reflecting a strong tendency to sell shorter-end issues.

"There is a lot of turmoil that could build up if these economic measures are not implemented fast enough," said Maryam Mansoury, emerging market strategist at Lehman Brothers.

Turkish economy officials were telling investors in London and Frankfurt last week that things would soon get better. Hardly a new message, but Turkey feels on surer ground now that Ms. Ciller has grasped the IMF nettle.

Officials said the public-sector borrowing requirement would be cut to 10 per cent of gross national product this year from 17 per cent in 1993, a \$14.2 billion trade gap would be narrowed and growth would be nil after a consumer-led 7.3

per cent in 1993. "Even if they achieve 50 per cent of the targets, it's still a change for the better," said the official at the German bank.

Turkey, its borrowing plans now skewed towards debt markets, is talking to U.S. and European banks for a club loan, which bankers said could be around \$1 billion, to build up dwindling foreign reserves which stood at \$4.6 billion in April.

Foreign traders expect a high lira devaluation to continue in the next few months before Ms. Ciller's measures bear fruit.

For equity traders, the Turkish experience has also proved disappointing. Many of them were caught long when the Istanbul stock market tumbled 40 per cent from its 23,883 peak on Jan. 13. The composite index stood at 17,450.83

Monday. Shares of Fiat's Turkish unit TOFAS, which were overvalued in foreign markets at \$16 in March, now trade at \$8.

Alcatel-owned Teletas owed four million lira (\$110 million) by the state-owned PTT, is seeking court permission to reorganise its own debts.

"Investors will be very selective," said Lehman's Mansoury. Quality names and private companies with no debts and positive cash balances could feel the pinch least, she added.

With most firms revealing bleak first quarter profits and many in the red, the market could dive further.

Direct foreign investments are also running out of steam. Three-month foreign capital inflow has totalled \$227 million this year, against \$257 million in the same 1993 period.

Saudis go for gold, other minerals besides oil

JEDDAH, Saudi Arabia (R) — Saudi Arabia is inviting private investors to put in more than \$2.0 billion of new money for projects to tap its non-oil mineral resources.

The Kingdom already mines gold. It now wants to extract iron ore, phosphates and bauxite from under the desert sands.

It may also have uranium but all detail on that was confidential, deputy minister of petroleum and minerals Ibrahim Khabezi said Wednesday.

"We do have some showings. It is too early to tell," he

added. Ministry officials said gold output from mines at Mahd Al Dahab and Sukraybarat already exceeded 7.5 tonnes a year and might double by 1999 if three possible new mines went ahead.

For now, however, the government is seeking investors from Saudi Arabia and abroad willing to produce iron ore pellets, mine phosphates and explore the Arab World's only recoverable bauxite deposits.

Would-be investors were asked last month to come forward for a project worth \$550-

\$700 million to produce 2.2-4.0 million tonnes a year of iron ore pellets from deposits at Wadi Sawawin.

Eight firms, some of them foreign, have so far shown interest.

In May, applicants will be invited to make pre-qualifying bid submissions in a bigger project worth \$1.75 billion to mine phosphates at Al Jalamid which would be used by an export fertiliser plant at the new industrial city of Jubail.

Later, the ministry will seek investment of up to \$55 million to evaluate bauxite reserves at

Az Zabirah believed to exceed 100 million tonnes.

This would be a component of a wider project that could by the end of the century also include a refinery at Jubail to turn the bauxite into alumina.

The Saudis would then hope to sell this to existing aluminium smelters in Bahrain and Dubai which at present get their feedstock from Australia.

The Saudi Arabian Basic Industries Corporation (SABIC), a vast state-controlled conglomerate, has hinted it would be interested in building the refinery which

could cost up to \$700 million.

The government may begin awarding licences in 10 months' time in these ventures. Meanwhile, Mr. Zuberi said the projects would fit well the strategic guidelines aimed at getting private industry more deeply involved in the Saudi economy.

The kingdom also wants to diversify away from almost-total reliance on petroleum. A lease has already been issued to a Saudi firm to mine copper and zinc at Masane where production may begin in two years' time.

British Foreign office to cut 500 jobs

LONDON (R) — Britain is to cut 500 foreign office jobs and is considering sharing some embassies with Germany because of budget cuts, a top official said Wednesday. Electronic gadgetry will replace security officers and Britain's presence in Latin America and Africa is being trimmed.

Senior civil servant Sir David Gillmore said Britain's Foreign and Commonwealth Office, which currently has a staff of 6,400 plans to reduce larger posts and cut 500 support staff jobs at home and overseas.

British embassy numbers range from 96 in Washington to just one agent in Antigua and Tristan da Cunha.

He said plans were being considered to share embassies with Germany in Azerbaijan, Ecuador and Iceland.

"All this is tough medicine," Gillmore told a parliament committee probing the finances of the diplomatic service which is having its budget cut by seven per cent as Britain battles to trim its post-recession deficit.

The foreign office budget for the 1994 to 1995 financial year is £1.18 billion (\$1.76 billion), he said.

When members of parliament expressed concern about £56 million (\$84 million) being cut from the security budget, Sir Gillmore assured them staff and the material they handled would not be put in jeopardy.

"Diplomats overseas are vulnerable," he said, singling out for praise staff who had worked in Bogota, Beirut, Khartoum and Kigali.

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"Diplomats overseas are vulnerable," he said, singling out for praise staff who had worked in Bogota, Beirut, Khartoum and Kigali.

LONDON (R) — Britain is to cut 500 foreign office jobs and is considering sharing some embassies with Germany because of budget cuts, a top official said Wednesday. Electronic gadgetry will replace security officers and Britain's presence in Latin America and Africa is being trimmed.

Senior civil servant Sir David Gillmore said Britain's Foreign and Commonwealth Office, which currently has a staff of 6,400 plans to reduce larger posts and cut 500 support staff jobs at home and overseas.

British embassy numbers range from 96 in Washington to just one agent in Antigua and Tristan da Cunha.

He said plans were being considered to share embassies with Germany in Azerbaijan, Ecuador and Iceland.

"All this is tough medicine," Gillmore told a parliament committee probing the finances of the diplomatic service which is having its budget cut by seven per cent as Britain battles to trim its post-recession deficit.

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Graduate Careers in Financial Journalism

Reuters is the leading international news and business information organisation. Using the latest technology, it supplies the global business community and news media with a wide range of products, including real-time financial data, transaction systems, trading room systems, access to numeric and textual historical databases, news and news pictures.

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Beginning in September, the scheme will comprise seven weeks practical training in London, followed by experience on the economic news desks and reporting units as well as specialist instruction in the financial markets. Trainees will then be assigned back to the Middle East.

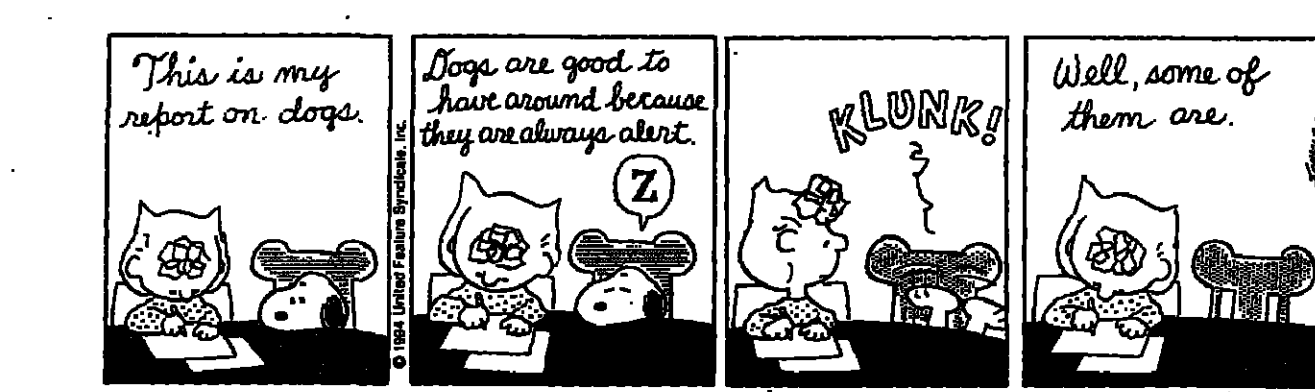
This represents an excellent career opportunity for graduates (most probably in economics or maths) who can combine an interest in the international financial markets with the ability to write with flair and accuracy in English and Arabic while meeting strict deadlines. The rewards will be attractive, with a competitive salary supported by benefits including annual holiday, health cover and the chance to participate in the Reuter Save As You Earn (SAYE) share option scheme.

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Applications must be received by May 15 and interviews will be scheduled for the end of May.

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Peanuts



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY APRIL 28, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: This morning be more precise in handling your personal affairs and try to have more recreation in your life to cut down on tensions that have been mounting. Avoid a tendency to spend too much.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Make plans to have greater abundance in the future. You can get much accomplished now if you apply yourself in the right manner.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Start using a new and more efficient system and test it for practicality. Take no risks while in motion today.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Take care of important correspondence and agreements and then do any work you have promised to do. Safeguard your health.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Engage in new outlets that can bring you added income. Make repairs to property that are needed right now.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Study your personal faults and take steps to improve them. Don't neglect social activities and have some fun. Express happiness.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) This is an ideal day to

improve relations with an associate by being more cooperative. Handle an important business matter wisely.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Look to a good friend for a favour early in the day and get it. Come to a much better understanding with your loved ones.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) State your aims to trusted associates who can help you gain them. Don't neglect an important business matter today.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You want to advance in many ways so find the right methods for doing so. Strive for increased happiness in both personal and professional life.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Find a new system for handling any promises you have made and get excellent results. Maintain a cheerful manner for all to see.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Confirm agreements you make with associates and then carry through with the tasks connected with them. Be wise on any endeavour.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Take time to improve the appearance of your surroundings early in the day and then focus your attention on other matter which must be done.

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY APRIL 29, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Fascinating new ideas will assist your growth and development as you maintain harmony with family members and add to your prestige by becoming even more involved in civic matters under four good aspects.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Any tasks you do today can bring fine benefits, be it in any realm of your existence. Later enjoy the company of congenial friends and family.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Make arrangements early in the day for recreations over the weekend. Find better ways of improving your appearance for your success.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Take time to handle those small tasks at home and they soon will be behind you. This is a good day to buy those supplies you need.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Show that you can communicate well with others. Long-time associates are most favourable to you now in whatever you wish to accomplish.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Handle monetary affairs early in the day since you have the power to be clever and exact at that time. Be more sure of yourself around those in authority.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Engage in activities that

will improve your image and bring you greater success. Evening is fine for sprucing up your personal life for all to see.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Sit in the quiet of your home and figure out how to operate more efficiently and profitably in the future. Plan a romantic evening with mate.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Confide in a good friend who can assist you with some personal problem you have. Be wary of one who is gossiping about your personal life.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Engage in those activities you like that can add to your prestige. Let your work stand out as something superior to those in charge.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Any new project should be studied very carefully before you go ahead with it. This is not a good day to make changes which are involved.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Be very precise in the handling of any special task you want to do. Try to be less critical of others today and you will achieve much prestige.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Know what it is associates expect of you and coordinate efforts more intelligently. Deepen relationships with new acquaintances.

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

SUPEA
DEWUN
DHELVA
HEWPEN

Print answer here: ALL

Yesterday's Jumbles: FOLIO SWOOP BOUNTY MARIN

Answer: When you cheat on your diet the result can be — WAIST-FULL

THE Daily Crossword by Samuel K. Flegner

ACROSS
1 Maid of Orleans
10 Put away
14 Slacken
15 Synthetic fabric
16 Lower of Galathea
17 Yards
20 Urbane
21 Part of sofa
22 Ram's mate
23 Make — meet
26 Jargon
28 Fashionable resort
31 Bauxite
32 Stock
37 Day of the wk.
38 Drug enforcement agent
40 Member of a pride
41 Piano tuner's concern
45 Selling
46 — bear
47 Grade
48 Widower
51 Lenin's river
52 Summer hrs.
53 Series
54 Fox
57 Hole puncher
60 Mope
62 Wear gradually
66 Flag features
70 Cattle
71 Type of screen
72 Enormous
73 Summit
74 Shintone
75 Flamingo's Sommer

DOWN
2 Football team
3 Where Gobi is
4 Chutzpah
5 A fogger
6 Telling off
7 Disenchant
8 Poisonous
9 Orwell's "Farm"
10 Pouch
11 Yeann
12 Scarer
13 Abstract being
18 Lessee
19 Hawaiian goose
24 Can
27 Converse
28 Daub
30 Aptom
31 Shintone
32 Stock
34 Family circle member
35 Played (with)
36 Beginning
38 Flirt
42 Whisker
43 Poessia
44 Stock exchange member
49 Flays
50 Most faithful
54 Only resin
56 Take the wheel
57 One of the Alsatians
58 Defeat
59 Vocation
61 Door handle
63 October's stone
64 Escribator
65 Punta del
67 Actor Harrison
68 Ussie
69 slopes
69 Hyson

Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

PIANO SWOOP BOUNTY MARIN

ACROSS: 1. Maid of Orleans, 10. Put away, 14. Slacken, 15. Synthetic fabric, 16. Lower of Galathea,

West Bank, Gaza investment trickles through Israeli red tape

RAMALLAH, West Bank (R) — Seven months after the PLO and Israel decided to make peace, Palestinian and foreign investment in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip seems likely to be a trickle rather than a flood.

A string of high-profile projects have hit the headlines but few are fully operational. Upheavals such as the delay in implementing a self-rule accord for Palestinians in Gaza and the Jericho area of the West Bank, and a Jewish settler's massacre of some 30 Arabs in a Hebron mosque in February, have played a part in dampening the euphoria that followed the signing of a peace deal in September in Washington.

But Palestinian businessmen say the much greater obstacle is the web of Israeli regulations and restrictions that has controlled Palestinian economic growth for 27 years, and uncertainty about whether the web will unravel.

"Hundreds of new companies have been established but they remain on paper. We will have peace, this is inevitable. But what kind of peace is what businessmen are asking," said Samer Shehadeh, a founder of the year-old National Insurance Company.

Ibrahim Abdul Hadi, a leading businessman in the West Bank town of Nablus, said he had just received a permit to establish an iron rod manufac-

turing plant after three years.

"Now I will have great difficulty in calling all the investors back and getting them interested again," he said.

"The Israeli mentality has not changed. A project can lie on an official's desk for years, whether he signs it or not he doesn't care. If he signs it, he's doing you a favour," he said.

In the emerging West Bank economic hub of Ramallah, the plush five-storey Commercial Bank of Palestine opened its doors this month, hoping to provide the financial apparatus that the territories surely lack. A few yards (metres) down the road, the Bank of Jordan has also opened.

Palestinians living abroad have set up a \$200 million investment holding company but the office has yet to establish an office inside the territories.

Other spectacular-sounding projects like a joint venture bank between Palestinians and Israel's Bank Leumi, and a conglomerate to group Israel's Koor Industries with Palestinian, Moroccan and Spanish counterparts, also remain non-factual.

The PLO-Israeli pact brought rosy visions from both sides of a new Middle East where peace is bolstered by an economic boom.

Hundreds of Palestinian and foreign investors swarmed through the territories sniffing for opportunities. PLO policy

makers say the main hope for the economy is the formidable money and business skills of the Palestinian diaspora.

But Palestinians say the foreigners largely focused on projects linked to the billions of dollars of aid promised by donors to boost peace by rebuilding Palestinian infrastructure.

These are now on hold until the long-delayed implementation of self-rule — still subject to negotiation — actually begins.

A few dozen Palestinians from abroad have placed \$100,000 each in Israeli banks to gain residency under a new investment scheme. But one businessman living in the Arab World complains he faces stifling bureaucracy and uncertainty.

"This money is my commitment to my homeland. On any rational terms I should have put it somewhere else," said the businessman, who asked not to be named.

Ramallah industrialist Jalil Zabani said even tight Israeli closures that have paralysed the Palestinian economy since the Hebron massacre do not affect investment decisions.

"Trade is one thing and investment another. We are in the worst recession now for years but it is related to short-term political events. Investors look beyond that," he said.

But the future shape of the Palestinian economy, and how

much independence Israel will allow it, is still unclear.

Economic talks between the PLO and Israel have made some progress but are still stuck on the question of trade policy. The PLO demands the right to set its own trade policy and tariffs. Israel has responded by threatening to cut all economic links if there is no customs union.

Around the uncertainty, one field of investment is speeding ahead — land development and housing. Land prices have moved little from the highs established after the Washington signing and in towns all over the territories, apartment blocks and offices are slowly going up.

But businessmen point out it is Palestinian population growth and Israeli restrictions on land use that fuel the real estate boom.

"We have a population growth rate of four per cent per year, perhaps the highest in the world," said Jowad Medhi, a Gazan industrialist who has switched to real estate development.

He said his only hope for the territories factory he started was to export, an operation so mired in bureaucracy for Palestinians that it effectively requires Israeli middlemen.

"People will always need houses so we'll keep on building. But that doesn't mean the economy as a whole is flourishing," he pointed out.

GCC to lose \$17b from oil tax

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Arab Gulf states will lose more than \$17 billion this decade if industrial states go ahead with planned new energy taxes, according to a Saudi oil official.

The taxes, proposed by the European Union (EU), would hit the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) hardest since it provides nearly 70 per cent of the world's oil exports, said Majid Al Munif, an adviser to Saudi Oil Minister

Hisham Nazer.

Since Arab Gulf states account for around 65 per cent of OPEC's oil exports, they will be more affected than other members, he said in a study presented at an energy conference in Muscat.

"The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is estimated to have an oil export decline of 450,000 barrels per day (b/d) and a real revenue decline of \$3.4 billion in the year 200," he said. "The GCC's cumulative real income loss is estimated at

\$17.7 billion compared to the pre-tax scenario."

GCC states and other oil producers have strongly attacked the tax, which could be enforced in the EU and other members of the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

GCC countries — Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates — argue the tax will hit their economies as oil accounts for more than 90 per

cent of their national income.

They have accused the EU of seeking additional revenue to tackle budget deficits, but the Europeans defend the tax as measure aimed at protecting the environment by containing the emission of carbon dioxide.

EU and GCC foreign ministers will meet in Riyadh early next month to discuss the tax, which has hurt their relations and overshadowed negotiations for a free trade agreement.

Japan motor vehicle exports fall by 18%

TOKYO (AFP) — Japanese motor vehicle exports in the year to March fell by 18.3 per cent from the figure for the year to March 1993 to 4,622,092 units for the second consecutive annual decline to the lowest figure since 1979, an industry group said Wednesday. The country's exports in March fell by 24.5 per cent to 424,901 units, which also marked the ninth consecutive double-digit decline, the Japan Automobile Manufacturers' Association (JAMA) said.

The association attributed the continued serious decline to the global recession, the rapid growth of overseas production by Japanese automakers, as well as the slump of overseas sales due to the appreciation of the yen, which has made Japanese-made automobiles less competitive.

"The new situation will no longer allow Japan to export more than five million automobiles," a JAMA official said, in a reference to Japan's expanding overseas production.

Israeli companies see Egypt as gateway to Arab market

CAIRO (R) — Israeli telecommunications firms, denied direct access to money-spinning Middle East markets by an Arab boycott of their country, say they hope to use Egypt as a springboard to launch their products in the region.

Delegates from the six companies, in Egypt to attend a trade fair, said they were looking for partnerships with Egyptian companies who might produce their goods under licence for sales elsewhere in the Middle East.

Egypt is the only Arab state to have signed a peace treaty with Israel and is exempt from an Arab League boycott of the Jewish state.

Haim Ashkenazi, an executive with the Israel Export Institute, said the companies were the first Israeli telecommunications firms to exhibit in the Arab World.

"Egypt is the country which opened the door to us, so we hope to use this as a way in," he said.

Elisha Ben-Nachum, sales

manager at cables manufacturer Teidor, said his company would be discussing possibilities of joint venture partnerships with Egyptian firms. "It's a stepping point to the other Arab countries. We already sell in Morocco, but we're looking for the regional market now," he said.

The Arab Boycott of Israel also blacklists companies with major investments in the Jewish state, but there have been signs that this "secondary" boycott is slipping.

U.S. Trade Secretary Ron Brown, on a visit to the region in January, said a number of U.S. companies on the boycott blacklist had been prominent exhibitors at a trade show in Riyadh that month.

Another Israeli company at the Cairo show said it was looking for joint ventures

agreements with Egypt or other African countries to produce its emergency back-up generators.

And Omri Avidan of Sogo Electronics, which sells facilities for telephone switch-

boards, said companies based in Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, and Bahrain, had shown interest in the product.

One of the firms, National Telecommunications Operator Bezeq, is using the occasion to inaugurate a direct telephone line linking Israel and Egypt. "This is a big breakthrough. It is the first direct link between Israel and an Arab country," said Bezeq official Daniel Charbit.

The terrestrial fibre-optic line can carry thousands of calls between Cairo and Tel Aviv. At present calls have to be routed via submarine cables to Italy, Mr. Charbit said.

But despite the optimism, that links to Egypt might offer a way into Arab markets, the Israeli in Cairo had no illusions that barriers preventing them from participating directly in the rich Arab markets were about to come down.

Mr. Ben-Nachum said his company had approached a Saudi Arabian company also. "They told us 'It's too early to do business,'" he said.

Africa, M.E. telecoms need \$25b investment

CAIRO (R) — African and Middle East telecommunications need at least \$25 billion of investment by the end of the decade just to maintain their current modest rate of growth, a senior U.N. official has said.

Pekka Tarjanne, secretary-general of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), said still more money was required to make inroads in sub-Saharan Africa, which has only one telephone line for every 250 inhabitants.

He urged the delegates at Africa Telecom 94 — a trade fair and forum — to seek partnerships with governments or local firms in the region. About 280 companies are exhibiting at the show. Mr. Tarjanne said \$3 bil-

lion was invested in telecommunications in the region in 1992, just 30 per cent of the sector's revenue.

"This problem of underinvestment needs to be addressed in a number of countries," he told delegates.

Mr. Tarjanne said that 4.7 million new lines had been installed in Africa and the Middle East from 1987 to 1992.

"ITU research has shown that a minimum investment of \$25 billion is required by the end of the decade in order to sustain the current, relatively modest, levels of growth in the region."

A much higher level of investment would be necessary to make a significant impact in the African conti-

nent, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa," Mr. Tarjanne said.

He said governments should establish clear regulatory outlines for firms working in the sector, but "responsibilities for taking the risks must lie with the private sector."

Other speakers at the conference backed Mr. Tarjanne's call for private investment and deregulation in the region.

Mahmoud El Soury, chairman of Egypt's National Telecommunications Organisation, identified tight state control as a major force preventing the sector from getting private investment.

In some cases, governments are so sensitive about

the sector that it is viewed as intrinsically linked with the issue of national sovereignty," said Olawale Ige, chief executive of the Nigerian firm Informatics General and Electrics Ltd.

"The private sector is the key to action," said Jonathan Solomon, a director at the British firm Cable and Wireless.

But others said that most joint ventures involving foreign firms ended in failure.

"Unless there is the commitment, will and a genuine desire to ensure universal telecommunications accessibility, joint ventures may not necessarily further the cause of developing nations," Mr. Ige said.

Lloyd's backers launch biggest court challenge

LONDON (R) — Some of the biggest losers in the Lloyd's of London insurance market began a landmark three-month battle in the High Court Tuesday seeking compensation from their agents for alleged negligence.

Some 20 names, mostly middle-aged men in city suits, heard their counsel, Geoffrey Vos, allege that managers of Lloyd's Gooda Walker syndicates had exhibited "incompetence on a spectacular scale" in failing to reinsure massive catastrophe loss liabilities.

An action group representing about 70 per cent of Gooda Walker backers, some 3,063 names, is claiming \$629 billion (\$97.1 million) compensation, their share of \$928 million (\$1.38 billion) in audited Gooda Walker losses to date.

This covers alleged negligent underwriting from 71 Lloyd's members' and managing agencies, a record number of parties in an English legal action. Names support the 300-year-old insurance market with their personal wealth as collateral. Gooda Walker accounts for around a fifth of the market's total \$5.5 billion (\$8.21 billion) losses announced in the last three years.

Mr. Vos said it was the duty of catastrophe loss syndicates to be aware of the probability that disasters would occur and that the disasters that caused the losses at Gooda Walker were "neither unprecedented, nor unexpected."

"It would be charitable to describe the underwriting procedures (of the syndicates) as gambling," Mr. Vos said.

Lloyd's names include 15 members of Britain's House of Lords and about 50 legislators from the ruling Conservative

Party.

One present in court, a businessman, said he had suffered personal losses of at least \$1.5 million (\$2.24 million). "We were recruited avidly and we were misled. The real responsibility for that lies with Lloyd's," he said.

The defendants say the losses were more than could have been anticipated and they could not be held liable for them.

Lloyd's has announced losses of \$5.5 billion (\$3.21 billion) in the last three years as a result of huge claims from a recent series of natural and industrial disasters.

Gooda Walker specialised in the high-risk area of catastrophe reinsurance and was overwhelmed by claims in the early 1990s. Total Gooda Walker losses are expected to reach \$1.1 billion (\$1.64 billion).

Mr. Vos said any one of these disasters would have overwhelmed the syndicates involved and that assessments of the syndicates' probable maximum losses were either not made or were wildly inaccurate.

The Gooda Walker case is the first of a string of actions against Lloyd's agents brought by names' action groups and will be keenly watched for the precedents it will set.

Altogether, names are seeking compensation for around \$3 billion (\$4.48 billion) of Lloyd's total losses to date. Market analysts say Lloyd's will announce a \$2 billion (\$2.99 billion) loss in May for its 1991 year.

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at mid-session on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.

U.S. \$1.00 costs	1.3742/52	Canadian dollar
	1.6738/48	Deutschmarks
	1.8812/22	Dutch guilders
	1.4296/06	Swiss francs
	34.46/50	Belgian francs
	5.7510/60	French francs
	1609.0/0.5	Italian lire
	102.74/84	Japanese yen
	7.8200/00	Swedish crowns
	7.2740/90	Norwegian crowns
	6.5910/60	Danish crowns
One sterling	\$1.5052/62	
One ounce of gold	\$374.70/375.10	

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Hata fails to mend coalition rift

TOKYO (R) — Prime Minister Tsutomu Hata, still floundering two days after his election, prepared Wednesday to launch Japan's first minority government in four decades after failing to mend the broken ruling coalition.

Mr. Hata faces the prospect of unstable minority rule and early elections after trying in vain to persuade the Socialist Party to return to the coalition.

The Socialists walked out Tuesday after Mr. Hata's chief ally, backstage boss Ichiro Ozawa, created a new parliamentary bloc grouping all the coalition parties except the Socialists.

On Wednesday Mr. Ozawa held out an olive branch, offering to dissolve the bloc which the Socialists saw as a move to relegate them to the sidelines of government.

His overture was flatly rejected. "We don't plan to return to the coalition," Wataru Kubo, Socialist secretary-general, said after meeting Mr. Ozawa.

"There's no sense to holding up the formation of a new cabinet," he urged Hata to get started," he told reporters.

Mr. Kubo ruled out a last-

ditch meeting between Mr. Hata and Socialist Party Chairman Tomiichi Murayama. "There's not going to be such a meeting," he said.

Mr. Hata was due to decide when to form a cabinet at a meeting with his alliance partners Wednesday evening.

Officials at Mr. Hata's Shinseito (Renewal Party) said he hoped to begin the task later Wednesday or Thursday in order to have a government in place before the start of a 10-day holiday period Friday.

News reports said Mr. Hata might reserve the six posts that the Socialists had occupied in the outgoing government in case they returned to the alliance.

The latest crisis has prolonged a paralysis of government already two months old. Long overdue are the state budget for 1994/95, supposed to have taken effect on April 1, and measures to fire up the recession-bound economy.

With a weak government, Japan will also have a difficult time drafting market-opening measures to present to the United States by the promised mid-June deadline.

Mr. Ozawa is widely blamed for sparking the political chaos.

"Ozawa's plan for political reconfiguration calls for the destruction of all existing parties and the creation of a large governing bloc that will support his plan for restructuring Japan," said columnist Takashi Tachibana.

"It means a short life span for Mr. Hata's administration."

Just hours after the Socialists helped elect Mr. Hata to succeed outgoing Premier Morihiro Hosokawa, Mr. Ozawa created a new bloc grouping the coalition's conservatives and centrists to the exclusion of the Socialists.

Mr. Hata himself admitted being left in the dark. "I wasn't aware the parliamentary bloc would be formed (right away)," he told reporters earlier, adding that he had thought it would be a mid-term goal.

Mr. Ozawa sees the bloc as a step towards his long-cherished goal of creating a new conservative party to rival the once-dominant Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), still the biggest political group. But the

Socialists reject the idea of a political system dominated by two conservative parties.

Hirotaka Akamatsu, a former Socialist secretary-general, said there was no likelihood of his party rejoining the government as long as Mr. Ozawa continued to dominate affairs.

"Ozawa misjudged us," he said. "Now, even if he and his backers offer to disband the bloc, we're not going back with things the way they are."

The Socialists hold 74 seats in the 511-strong lower house. Without them, Mr. Hata has 187 seats, short of the LDP's 206.

Unless he can lure them back even now, Mr. Hata will have to settle for forming Japan's first minority government since 1955, a development likely further to delay legislation and hasten general elections, not due until the summer of 1997.

"There's no way around it," said commentator Hisayuki Miyake. "Hata will have to form a minority government if the Socialists don't come around... minority rule means weak government and early elections."



Rescue workers search for victims in the debris of the crashed China Airlines Airbus A300 at Nagoya Airport (AFP photo)

3 boys among 9 survivors in Japan crash

NAGOYA, Japan (R) — Three little boys were among the nine passengers who miraculously survived the crash of a China Airlines plane in this Central Japanese city on Tuesday night. The crash killed 262 people.

Airport officials said Wednesday that all nine survivors were in either serious or critical condition.

The Airbus A300-600R exploded into small, mangled pieces on impact at Nagoya Airport.

The airport was reopened at 5:30 p.m. (0830 GMT) on Wednesday, 21 hours after the crash.

"All nine survivors are in serious condition," said Saburo Hara, deputy head of the Transport Ministry's Nagoya Airport Office. "We can't ask them about details of the plane crash," he said.

One three-year-old Filipino boy, identified as Hiroyoshi Villanueva, was unconscious in critical condition and was undergoing emergency surgery at a local hospital.

Japanese brothers Yuji Nakayama, six, and his brother, Seiji, three, were in serious condition.

"Papa, papa," Seiji cried out when his father came to identify them, hospital staff said.

Kyodo News Agency said their mother, Daisy Nakayama, a Filipino, and an uncle, Kazuo Doi, who were returning with the boys from Manila where they had attended Mrs. Nakayama's sister's wedding, both died.

"It was nothing but a miracle," said firefighter Sadashige Kikuyama, who pulled out the boys from amid the burning wreckage and dozens of charred, mangled bodies.

"He was caught under the plane's tires," Kikuyama said. "I just happened to hear this faint call of a boy saying 'mama, mama, it hurts.'"

Mr. Kikuyama and his colleagues removed the huge tire and rushed the boy to safety.

The other survivors included Noriyasu Shirai, 31, a Japanese, Sylene Betonio, 22, a Filipino, and two Taiwanese, Yang Shih-Wen, 33, and Chu Wen-Ching, 41. All but Chu were in critical condition, hospital officials said.

There were also two adult females of unknown nationality who were in critical condition, hospital officials said.

Kyodo said one of them was Marian Hasebe, 34, of Nagoya, who appeared to be a non-Japanese Asian woman.

Families of the dead were taken to a makeshift morgue to identify the bodies. The bodies were in an air force hangar opposite the runway.

By late afternoon, only 69 of the dead were identified by either the families or by their passports or other belongings.

Relatives from Taiwan and the Philippines had not arrived by late afternoon Wednesday.

"It's very difficult to identify the bodies," said a police spokesman at the makeshift morgue. "Only a few of the bodies are unscratched. Most of them suffered from severe fractures or bad burns."

Kiminori Ishizuka, 71, said he was among a few who managed to identify a victim, his eldest daughter, Chizuko Fujita, 50.

"My daughter's face was unscarred although those of many other passengers were badly burned," Ishizuka said. "She only had a scratch near her mouth."

"My first reaction (after news of the crash) was to hope that my daughter was still alive," he said, and then burst into tears.

Police were calling in dentists and forensic experts to help families to identify their kin.

Meanwhile, Transport Ministry investigators were starting their probe into the worst aircraft accident in Japan in nine years.

The 11-member team led by Manabu Matsumoto, chairman of the Aircraft Accident Investigation Committee, would start analysing the cockpit voice and flight-data recorders, which were retrieved from the wreck Tuesday.

Committee officials said it would be at least 10 days before Mr. Matsumoto's team would release a preliminary report.

Mr. Matsumoto's predecessor, Hiroshi Fujiwara, said the probe would probably focus on why the plane stalled after aborting a landing attempt.

Nagoya Police raided the offices of China Airlines and confiscated documents to investigate the possibility of professional negligence.

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U.S. envoy to Haiti quits as policy changes

WASHINGTON (R) — The U.S. special envoy to Haiti has resigned, the State Department announced Tuesday, as the Clinton administration veered towards a new tougher policy against Haiti's military rulers.

A brief statement from State Department spokeswoman Christine Shelly said special envoy Lawrence Pezzullo agreed to step down effective April 29 after meeting Secretary of State Warren Christopher last Saturday.

The move was welcomed by supporters of ousted Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, one of whom said Mr. Pezzullo was associated with a failed policy.

"It was necessary for him to be replaced in order for the administration to make clear that the policy he had implemented and which is now discredited and which is in fact, finally being abandoned," the Aristide adviser said.

A State Department official said Mr. Christopher did not ask for Mr. Pezzullo's resignation. "They met, had a discussion and agreed it was best he left," the official said. "He did not quit in disgust, neither was he fired."

But Mr. Pezzullo, 68, an experienced former U.S. ambassador to Uruguay and Nicaragua who took up the Haiti position 13 months ago, was seen as the author of a policy which the Clinton administration is now abandoning.

Mr. Pezzullo backed a plan to build a new broad-based government in Haiti that he hoped would pave the way for the eventual return of Mr. Aristide, ousted by a military coup in September 1991.

Last week, the Clinton administration, under fierce attack from some of its own supporters over Haiti, gave up the Pezzullo plan and announced it would seek to stiffen United Nations sanctions against Haiti's military rulers to force them into submission.

"It was clearly impossible for him to continue. The new policy needed credibility and Pezzullo was under attack from Congress and Aristide," said one administration source.

The Haitian government Mr. Pezzullo wanted to build would have included some supporters of the forces that overthrew Mr. Aristide. But Mr. Aristide rejected the plan, seeing it as a U.S. retreat from its insistence on his unconditional return to power.

Haiti has been without a hands-on leader since Prime Minister Robert Malval resigned four months ago. Mr. Malval was the choice of toppled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide but stepped down in December after the military prevented him from working and blocked a U.N.-mediated plan to return Mr. Aristide to power.

The head of Haiti's Chamber of Deputies, Frantz Monde, asked parliament Tuesday to take steps "to fill the institutional void" left by Mr. Malval's departure.

Mr. Monde is a fierce opponent of Mr. Aristide.

In the first three months of this year, an increasingly bitter rift opened between the United States and Mr. Aristide.

NEWS IN BRIEF

N. Korea 'will not allow' full inspections

TOKYO (AFP) — North Korea said Wednesday it would not allow full inspections, including sampling of spent fuel, when it permits international monitors to witness the replacement of fuel rods at its nuclear reactor. A North Korean Foreign Ministry spokesman said Pyongyang would allow experts from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to conduct inspections "for the continuity of safeguards to verify non-diversion of nuclear materials." But he added that North Korea would regard it as "a sinister political intention" if Washington and the IAEA "rudely demand sampling and other inspection activities," according to a dispatch carried by the official Korean Central News Agency and monitored here. The Vienna-based IAEA has said it would not send experts to observe the replacement of fuel rods at a five-megawatt experimental nuclear reactor unless they were allowed substantial inspections. According to U.S. officials, the changing of fuel rods, possibly in the next few weeks, could provide enough plutonium for North Korea to make four or five nuclear bombs.

Heavy fighting rages in Cambodia

ARANYAPRATHET, Thailand (AFP) — Cambodian government troops and Khmer Rouge guerrillas were locked in battle Wednesday east of Poipet, with artillery and gun fire clearly audible across the border in Thailand. Fighting was centred around Nimit, on Route 5 between Poipet and Sisophon, and Route 5 was cut 12 kilometres out of Poipet. Thai officials said it was the second day of clashes in the area. Thai military officials said Tuesday that the guerrillas attacked in a pincer movement from the north and south. No figures were available on the number of men involved in the attack. In Phnom Penh, Cambodian Co-Premier Hun Sen said Tuesday that the Khmer Rouge had launched a heavy attack on the border town of Poipet and that more than 100 civilians had fled to Sisophon, 48 kilometres to the west. (He expressed surprise at the size of the guerrilla attack.)

Anglo-German summit opens

LONDON (AFP) — German Chancellor Helmut Kohl arrived in Britain Wednesday for a summit meeting with Prime Minister John Major on the future of Europe and the war in Bosnia, officials said. Mr. Kohl went directly to Mr. Major's country residence, Chequers, where he and Mr. Major were to meet and lunch. The chancellor was accompanied by his ministers of finance, economy, foreign affairs and defence, who were to meet simultaneously with their respective counterparts before joining the Kohl-Major summit. Government sources said the meetings would concentrate on the situation in Bosnia, expansion of the European Union to Eastern European countries, the EU's Corfu summit in June and Germany's rotating EU presidency which begins afterwards.

Russia to take part in G-7 political talks

ROME (R) — Russia will take part in political discussions at the G-7 summit in Naples, but not in the economic deliberations of the world's seven biggest economies, Italy said Wednesday. The office of outgoing Prime Minister Carlo Azeglio Ciampi said in a statement Russia would also take part in preparatory talks for the July 8-10 talks. "Russia will have a greater involvement," said a senior government official. "It will take part in the political part but not the economic one — we're not yet talking of a G-8." Russia has in the past attended G-7 summits as an observer and was presented with the results of the political and economic talks once they were over. Mr. Ciampi's office said. President Boris Yeltsin has been pushing for full membership of the group, which links the United States, Germany, France, Britain, Italy, Canada and Japan.

NATO military chiefs meet former foes

BRUSSELS (R) — NATO military chiefs met their counterparts from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union on Wednesday to discuss cooperation and the "partnership for peace" plan for joint exercises and training. It was the third such meeting since the end of the cold war, bringing together chiefs of staff from more than 30 countries, including the United States and Russia. The chairman of NATO's Military Committee, Field Marshal Sir Richard Vincent, told the meeting valuable progress had been made in "helping safeguard peace through active cooperation on defence matters and military contacts." "Given the number of world crises, as well as their complexity, it is increasingly evident that this cooperative approach... is a practical and useful element in our attempts to provide stability and peace," Marshal Vincent said. The military chiefs were due to discuss peacekeeping in Europe, including in former Yugoslavia, as well as the "partnership for peace" programme.

Gunmen kill Catholic in North Belfast

BELFAST (AP) — Gunmen killed a Roman Catholic man Tuesday night and police said they believe the attack may have been retaliation for the IRA slaying of two Protestants Sunday. The outlawed Protestant paramilitary group the Ulster Freedom Fighters claimed responsibility for Tuesday's killing in a statement to news organisations but gave no explanation for it. The gunman headquarters in Belfast said in a statement that the police headquarter the North Belfast home of the 52-year-old taxi driver and shot him as he sat watching television. On Sunday, an Irish Republican Army gunman killed two Protestant men as they sat chatting in two cars parked side by side in Garvaghy 45 miles (70 km) northwest of Belfast. The IRA said the two were members of the Ulster Freedom Fighters.

Deputy's slaying raises uproar in Russian Duma

MOSCOW (R) — The mafia-style murder of a Russian deputy, shot dead at his home, raised a storm in Russia's parliament Wednesday, with allies insisting he had been the victim of a political assassination.

Andrei Azderdzis, a member of the centrist New Regional Policy (NRP) group, was gunned down on the stairwell of his home at Khimki, a suburb of Moscow on Tuesday evening.

The killing of Mr. Azderdzis, 35, raised fears members of parliament might now become targets for the first time after a succession of killings of bankers and businessmen.

Mr. Azderdzis had also been chairman of the private MDK Bank, but left the post after being elected to the State Duma lower chamber in December.

"Judging from first reports it is clear that this was a contract killing and, in our view, it was a political killing," Vladimir Medvedev, a member of the NRP, told parliament.

Whether the killing itself was politically-motivated or the settling of an old score in Russia's increasingly violent business world, its victim was a politician. The effect on the mood of the Duma was dramatic.

Deputies demanded that Interior Minister Viktor Yerin, who has repeatedly pledged to crack down on mafia-style organised crime, appear in parliament to comment on the killing.

Several dozen set off for the victim's home to pay homage at the site of the attack.

Ultra-nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy demanded the interior minister's resignation.

"Pass on to the President (Boris Yeltsin), my acceptance of the position of Interior Minister," he commented, sarcastically.

Mr. Nixon was to be buried next to his wife, Pat, in the grounds of the Nixon Library, close to the modest white-painted house where he was born 81 years ago.

Mr. Clinton has declared Wednesday a national day of mourning and ordered all federal offices closed for the day.

The body of the 37th president, who died in New York last Friday after a stroke, was flown back to California Tuesday aboard a Boeing 707 he used to fly in as president.

Heavy fighting erupts in Rwanda capital

NAIROBI (R) — Mortar and rocket fire boomed over across Rwanda's capital Kigali, shattering a unilateral ceasefire declared by rebels, a senior United Nations official said Wednesday.

"It's broken down almost completely. There has been heavy shelling," Abdul Kabia, executive director of the U.N. Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) told Reuters by telephone.

Mass killings of opposition party supporters from the majority Hutu tribe and Tutsis by government soldiers and militia youths appeared to be continuing unabated.

The army and the militia are loyalists of slain Hutu President Juvenal Habyarimana, killed in a rocket attack on his plane on April 6. The rebel movement is dominated by Tutsis.

"We hear of fresh massacres every single day," said one foreign aid worker who asked not to be named.

A unilateral ceasefire was declared by the rebel Rwanda

Patriotic Front (RPF) at midnight Monday. Guerrilla leaders said they had come under bombardment by Tuesday afternoon.

Mr. Kabia said the airport east of the city, under the control of government forces, came under heavy mortar attack late Tuesday, preventing a U.N. plane from landing.

UNAMIR complained to the rebels, who explained government forces had moved their big guns onto the airfield.

"This was later confirmed and the U.N. has asked the government to remove their guns, which they agreed to do," said Mr. Kabia.

Both the U.N. and the RPF have proposed making the airport neutral, but the government has so far refused, U.N. officials said. The RPF shelled the airport Monday as three government helicopter gunships took off.

The shelling in Kigali kept up overnight and became sporadic after 9:00 a.m. local time (0700 GMT) Wednesday, Mr. Kabia said.

One missile slammed into a tennis court 15 metres from UNAMIR's headquarters.

Mr. Kabia said UNAMIR commander Brigadier-General Romeo Dallaire would try to meet military chief of staff Augustin Bizimungu and RPF officers to propose a mutual halt to fighting following the breakdown of the rebels' ceasefire.

The government said offered its own ceasefire in a document signed in Zaire Sunday.

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48 years old and a great-grandfather

PLZEN, Czech Republic (AFP) — Koloman Gazi, a resident of this western Czech town has set a world record by becoming a great-grandfather at the age of 48, according to the regional daily Pzinsky Denik. The newspaper said Gazi had his first child at the age of 15, who herself became a mother at the age of 15. Her son, Stefan, waited a little longer than his mother and grandfather and recently had a daughter, Miluska, at the age of 18. According to the Guinness Book of Records, the world record for becoming a great-grandfather is held by a 53-year-old Bulgarian, but Gazi has apparently beaten him to it.

Revival of My Fair Lady to close

NEW YORK (R) — Just over two weeks after actor Michael Moriarty stepped in to replace Richard Chamberlain as Professor Henry Higgins in the hit revival of My Fair Lady, the producers posted a closing notice Tuesday evening. The revival, which opened on Broadway to rave reviews in December, will close Sunday. Business at the box office dropped dramatically after Moriarty took over the role of the language-loving Henry Higgins from Richard Chamberlain. Variety reported this week the show sold only 59 per cent of its capacity last week. Chamberlain, who is known best for his role as the suave but kindly Dr. Kildare in the hit TV series of the same name, was in My Fair Lady from the beginning, when it opened last April. He toured throughout the country where the musical often broke box office records. The show opened in New York in December. At the time, producer Barry Weissler told Reuters he expected it would recoup its total investment within a matter of several weeks. But when Moriarty took over after Chamberlain's contract ended, business slumped.

Miss Romania misses plane, VIP treatment

MANILA (AP) — A disheveled Miss Romania lost out on VIP treatment when she arrived at the Manila airport after missing her flight from Bangkok. Michaela Ciolacu, who arrived two hours later than expected, dragged her own bags and queued at the customs area after the escorts assigned to meet her left when she did not appear on the scheduled flight. "She was pulling two pieces of wheeled luggage" an airport officer said. "On one arm she had a limp and a passport. It was too late when we found out she was a contestant." Miss Ciolacu seemed the worse for wear. When reporters asked if she had a boyfriend, she snapped: "Men are just trouble."

They'll be on their toes in San Francisco

SAN FRANCISCO (R) — The dance world will be preoccupied around San Francisco next spring when the city's ballet company will host a festival in honour of the 50th anniversary of the signing of the United Nations charter. The Bolshoi Ballet, the Kirov Ballet, the Shanghai Ballet, Ballet Nacional de Cuba, Rambert Ballet of Great Britain, the National Ballet of Caracas, the Dutch National Ballet and the Australian Ballet have all indicated an interest in attending the six-day festival May 9-14, 1995, said San Francisco Ballet artistic director Helgi Tomasson. The U.N. charter was signed in San Francisco in 1945, and numerous events, including "United We Dance, an international festival," are planned to commemorate the anniversary.

Brewer taps help in Dutch draught

AMSTERDAM (R) — Heineken, the world's second largest brewer, issued an urgent appeal for deliveries from its breweries across Europe as strikes at its main Dutch plants stripped bars and supermarkets of its beer. Heineken said it was tapping its non-Dutch breweries against the threat of beer

NEWS IN BRIEF

Kuwait may speed up visas to boost economy

KUWAIT (R) — Businessmen from outside the Gulf may soon be able to obtain short-stay visas on arrival at Kuwait airport or other border points under plans to cut red tape and boost the economy, a newspaper reported on Wednesday. The proposal for a streamlined 72-hour visa procedure will be considered by a government committee next week, the English-language Arab Times reported. The measure would help reactivate the stagnant non-oil economy and boost flagging business at local hotels. Citizens of fellow states belonging to the Gulf Cooperation Council — Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, The United Arab Emirates and Bahrain — may enter without visas. But procedures for other visitors require them to apply to Kuwaiti embassies abroad. They may board Kuwait-bound flights only after receiving confirmation the visa has been approved.

Ex-Thai police chief charged in theft case

BANGKOK (R) — Former national police chief Sawasdi Amornvith is among six senior police officers charged in the case of jewellery stolen from a palace in Riyadh, Interior Minister Chavalit Yongchaiyudh said on Wednesday. "I acknowledge the charge against police Gen. Sawasdi and police legal adviser Lieutenant-General Sanong Wattanasawangoon," Mr. Chavalit told reporters, confirming newspaper reports. Mr. Sawasdi was transferred late last year to an inactive position as general inspector attached to the Interior Ministry after being charged with less majestic for allowing an article that may have insulted the queen to appear in a royal gazette. He was later pardoned for the crime, a serious one in Thailand. The six have been charged with embezzlement and negligence of duty, current police chief Pratin Santiprapob said.

Militants vow to kill Mubarak in revenge

CAIRO (AFP) — The militant group Al Gamaa Al Islamiyah on Wednesday vowed to kill President Hosni Mubarak to avenge the death of its military leader. Police said they gunned down 32-year-old Talaat Yassin Hammam, head of the group's armed wing, and six other militants in a dawn raid Monday on his apartment in northeast Cairo (see page 2). In a statement sent to AFP, the Gamaa warned Mr. Mubarak, saying: "Your head, as well as those of hundreds of torturers in the interior (ministry), will not be enough for our revenge." It mocked the government's effectiveness in fighting militants, saying Hammam used to plan his operations from a building located "a few metres from the general intelligence offices" in central Cairo. Hammam "dealt one blow after the other" to the regime, the statement said.

U.S. aid to Egypt to retain nominal value

CAIRO (R) — The United States is likely to maintain the nominal value of its aid programme for Egypt for the foreseeable future, even if Israel and all its neighbours make peace, a senior U.S. aid official said on Tuesday. The U.S. civilian aid package, running at about \$900 million a year, is the largest single component in Egypt's aid receipts, which together are worth about \$3 billion a year. Carol Lancaster, deputy administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), said: "I'd be surprised if we didn't have an aid relationship for a long time, with a country as large as Egypt and as strategic in the region." In the past of course the aid and the support Egypt gave to the Camp David accords were linked... (but) there's no discussion of phasing it out," she told a news conference at the end of a visit to Egypt.

Dud grenade thrown into Istanbul restaurant

ISTANBUL (R) — An unidentified man tossed a grenade, which failed to explode, into a crowded restaurant in central Istanbul on Wednesday, triggering panic, police said. Two Russian tourists suffered bruises as customers fled the Diana hotel restaurant in Lalali district. The attacker escaped. There have been three previous bombings of tourist sites in Istanbul over the past five weeks. Two foreigners were killed and at least 15 people injured in a bomb attack on the covered bazaar on April 2, carried out by suspected Kurdish rebels.

3 Iranian soldiers killed in clashes

TEHRAN (AFP) — Bandits killed three soldiers and wounded five others in a clash in a major drug smuggling region of southern Iran, the paper Salam reported Wednesday. Security forces seized one of the bandits' vehicles in Sunday's fighting in Kerman province close to Baft, an area near the Pakistan border where there have been frequent such incidents, the paper said. Kerman and the neighbouring Sistan-Baluchistan province are key crossing points for traffickers smuggling drugs from Pakistan and Afghanistan onto the European and North American markets.

17 Iraqis held in Kuwaiti waters — diplomats

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait detained 17 Iraqis found in possession of 22 vessels in the emirate's territorial waters on Tuesday, diplomats said on Wednesday. It was the fifth reported Iraqi incursion since November 1993 when hundreds of protesters twice crossed the land border to protest about a U.N. demarcation of the boundary. The 17 were being held for questioning following their arrest by coast guards in waters between Kuwait's Warba and Bubiyan islands, the diplomats said by telephone. The 17 were spotted by Kuwaiti airforce planes on Monday and arrested on Tuesday in possession of 20 wooden boats and two fibreglass boats. Their purpose was not known.

Syria still buying Korean missiles — Israel

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Syria is still buying Scud missiles from North Korea, an Israeli general charged Wednesday, on the eve of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's arrival here. Mr. Christopher is due to carry a fresh Israeli peace offer to Syria on Saturday ahead of a resumption of bilateral peace talks in Washington in early May. "Syria is continuing to buy launchers and Scud missiles built in North Korea," General Zeev Livne, Israel's civil defence chief, told Israel Radio.

Abducted Sudan ambassador freed

NAIROBI (AFP) — Somali gunmen released unarmed and without conditions Sudan's ambassador to Mogadishu following intervention by Somali faction leaders, diplomats said Wednesday. The ambassador, Abdul Bagi Mohammad Hassan was abducted in Mogadishu last week by four Somalis who said they were from the Hawadle clan. They demanded a ransom of \$100,000. Mr. Hassan was freed after Sudanese officials who went to Mogadishu last week requested some undisclosed Somali politicians to help secure his release, said a diplomat who asked not to be named. The ambassador was "in good condition" and joked about having gained weight during his eight days in captivity. Several foreigners including a United Nations official, a Red Cross worker and employees of a catering firm have been kidnapped in the past two months amid a mounting wave of lawlessness as U.S. and other Western troops pulled out of the U.N. peacekeeping force in Somalia. All were freed after negotiations through clan elders.

China may stage two nuclear tests

LONDON (R) — China is likely to carry out two underground nuclear tests this year with the first expected towards the end of next month, according to a London think tank which monitors the tests. China is the only nuclear power still conducting tests. The other four — the United States, Russia, France and Britain — have all suspended them for time being. Patricia Lewis, director of the Verification Technology Information Centre (VERTIC), said she believed the Chinese were hurrying to complete a programme of tests before an expected global ban is negotiated, possibly next year.



QUEEN MOTHER LAID TO REST: Scenes from Wednesday's funeral of Her Majesty Queen Zein Al Sharaf, the Queen Mother, who was laid to rest at the Royal Cemetery (photo by Youssef Al 'Alam)



Israel hopes Christopher can tempt Syria into peace deal

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel is counting on U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher to pressure Syria into a positive response to a peace offer he will pass on at the weekend, foreign ministry officials said Wednesday.

But first the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israel must wrap up an agreement in Cairo to launch autonomy in the Gaza Strip and Jericho, the officials said. "We hope that during his stay in the region the negotiations on Gaza-Jericho will be completed successfully," a senior official said.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres could travel to Cairo on Thursday and meet PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat as well as Mr. Christopher if a deal is clinched.

Mr. Christopher would fly on to Israel late in the day ready for talks Friday with Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. "Israel expects the secretary of state will then focus on Syria," the official said. "He is coming to see Israel's proposals and carry them on to Syria."

"He will act as a go-between to present Israeli proposals to Syria and then come back with the response."

"Israel hopes that Christopher will be able to put pressure on the Syrians to moderate their position."

Mr. Christopher is expected to take Israeli position papers

on the Golan to Syrian President Hafez Al Assad on Saturday.

Israel has thrown out a series of ever stronger signals to Syria in the run-up to Mr. Christopher's visit about the extent of withdrawal it is prepared to consider from the strategic plateau.

Syrian media welcomed Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's offer last week to dismantle Jewish settlements on the Heights in return for peace, but urged him to turn his words into deeds.

Chief Israeli negotiator Itamar Rabinovich, speaking on Israel Radio, called the Syrian media reaction "disappointing."

However, he added: "We must differentiate between Syrian media reactions and substantive moves in negotiations. 'We are on the eve of the secretary of state's visit, and the important exchanges of words will be in Damascus between President Al Assad and Secretary Christopher,'" he said.

Mr. Rabin's centre-left coalition on Wednesday beat back an opposition attempt to introduce a bill that would require a two-thirds majority in parliament to approve any withdrawal. In a stormy session, the government won by 57 votes to 47.

Mr. Rabinovich said recent closed-door talks with Syrian delegates in Washington had

made "beginnings" on complex security issues and matters relating to timetables for a possible settlement.

"We were in a sense preparing the ground for a qualitative leap in these talks that could be reached either by the secretary of state or by the leadership of the two countries."

He said such a leap could take place this year if Mr. Assad signalled willingness to respond to Israeli overtures. "We are not asking for him to do us a favour," Mr. Rabinovich said. "The Syrians must do this for there to be an accord."

Mr. Rabin reiterated Tuesday that his country is ready to pull back from the Golan Heights and dismantle Jewish settlements there.

The statement, coming as Mr. Rabin concluded the formal part of a four-day visit to Russia, provided more evidence of Israel's wishes to move ahead in stalled talks with Syria.

Mr. Rabin told a news conference that Israel is "ready to make painful compromises for peace." "In the context of peace, I'm ready for a withdrawal on the Golan Heights. The geographical dimension will be dependent on the depth of peace," he said.

"For security reasons, we will not vacate settlements. For peace, we are ready to do so," Mr. Rabin added.

Gaza Bastille falls

GAZA CITY (AFP) — Nasser Fiteil rubbed his eyes in disbelief on Tuesday morning. The walls of the sinister Ansar II prison where he had served time were knocked down overnight by Israeli army bulldozers.

"Through our struggle and the negotiations we have managed to destroy this bastille of oppression," said the 26-year-old who spent three periods inside the walls — 18 days in 1987, the whole year of 1988, and 10 months in 1992.

"May God allow me to see all the bastilles of the occupation brought down," he said looking at the scattered barrels of cement which once made up the four-metre-high outside walls of Ansar II.

The single-storey building, once a British army horse stables, was used by Swedish U.N. forces until the 1967 Middle East war.

The Israeli army constructed a military base on the site and turned certain rooms into prison cells for Palestinians. But when the intifada erupted in December 1987, the base proved too small. The following April, the army appropriated surrounding land and erected 18 tents each to hold up to 35 prisoners.

Thirty mobile rooms were brought in and divided into 112 cells to hold four men each. At the height of the intifada, Ansar II held 1,500 Palestinians, divided into six sections, one for the under 16s.

The Shin Bet security services who "interrogated" suspects and tortured most of them, according to human rights groups, occupied another section.

The old British-built stables were used as a supply depot. But by the end of February the last 50 inmates had been transferred to prison camps in the Naqab desert as Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) edged towards agreement to launch Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

Israelis called the compound "Hof," meaning seafort, and the Palestinians Ansar II, after the Lebanese village where the Israeli army set up a huge detention centre during the 1982 invasion.

One watchtower still stands guard over the ruins. "There were 16 like that," he said. The walls have been bulldozed and the tarmac road through the prison dug up.

"Every stone brings back memories for me," said Sami Al Sawafiri, 24, who spent 18 months there. "Every corner has a story to tell."

"Ansar II should have been turned into a museum to show future generations the suffering we have been through," he said.

"We did not want the Israelis to destroy the prison so we could keep it as part of our history. They did it so as not to let the world see how they violated human rights," Mr. Sawafiri said.

Israeli warplanes attack Lebanon resistance bases

MARIJAYOUN (AP) — Israeli warplanes struck a base of resistance-fighters in South Lebanon on Wednesday as U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher began a new Middle East trip to promote Arab-Israeli peace.

Security sources in South Lebanon said two fighter-bombers fired two missiles into the hills of Mita in Iqlim Al Tufah, a stronghold of Hizbollah (Party of God).

There was no immediate report of casualties in the 2:20 p.m. (1120 GMT) attack.

In Israel, an army spokesman confirmed the raid. He said the planes hit their target and returned safely to base.

The area attacked was under Hizbollah's control and used as training bases and launching pads for attacks, the Israeli spokesman said.

The air raid came a few hours after Hizbollah guerrillas fired five rocket-propelled grenades and dozens of rounds of machinegun fire at a post manned by the Israeli-surrogate South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia.

The sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said there were no casualties in the early morning attack on the

SLA Hamra outpost in the western sector of the enclave. Israel has occupied in South Lebanon since 1985 as a "security zone" against cross-border guerrilla raids.

The SLA struck back with howitzers on the villages of Mansoura, Zieqin and Majdel Zoun facing Hamra.

In ensuing exchanges, Israeli and SLA forces blasted guerrilla positions facing the central sector of the "security zone" with 50 rounds of artillery, tank and rocket fire.

Hizbollah guerrillas retaliated by firing several Katyusha rockets on Israeli and SLA positions in the hills of Sojod, Rihan and Chizian.

Lebanese and Palestinian guerrillas have stepped-up attacks on the SLA in recent weeks, killing 17 militiamen and wounding 25 others in March alone.

On Monday two SLA militiamen were hurt in an attack claimed by Hizbollah.

Israel has repeatedly signing a peace treaty with Lebanon included an agreement to integrate the SLA into the regular army.

NATO 'alert' against Serb moves in Bosnia

BRUSSELS (Agencies) — The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) said Wednesday it was still ready to bomb any Bosnian Serb weapons found in violation of an allied exclusion zone around Gorazde and to launch air strikes if the Serbs attacked other "safe areas" in Bosnia.

The United Nations and NATO agreed there was no immediate need for air strikes around Gorazde, since the Serbs complied with a NATO deadline, which ran out at 0001 GMT on Wednesday, to withdraw heavy weapons at least 20 kilometres from the town, one of six mainly Muslim U.N.-designated "safe areas" in Bosnia.

An alliance spokesman said after a meeting of NATO ambassadors, who reviewed the latest intelligence information, that there were encouraging signs the "objective of lifting the strangulation of Gorazde has been achieved."

"This development gives hope for the future. Nonetheless, the alliance emphasises that the ultimatum remains in force and that it will continue to monitor the situation with the utmost vigilance," the spokesman said.

Hundreds of people have been killed in the siege of Gorazde in recent weeks. NATO and the United Nations were conducting a "robust reconnaissance" to make sure that all tanks, artillery and other heavy weapons had been removed.

"If any are discovered, they must be removed immediately or they will be subject to air strikes," the spokesman said.

The alliance, which had threatened sweeping air strikes around Gorazde and other

"safe areas" if they are attacked by the Serbs, would be watching to see if withdrawn weapons were used to lay siege to other Muslim areas, NATO sources said.

"The (NATO) council reiterated its determination to conduct air strikes in coordination with UNPROFOR (the U.N. Protection Force) if Gorazde and other safe areas... are attacked or exclusion zones are violated," the spokesman said.

That also includes the Bosnian capital Sarajevo, subject of a NATO ultimatum in February that forced the Serbs to withdraw their heavy weapons from around the city.

The alliance has said it will declare similar 20-kilometre exclusion zones around the four other "safe areas" — Tuzla, Zepa, Srebrenica and Bijac — if the Serbs even appear to threaten them with attack.

In Geneva, the Russian and French foreign ministers called Wednesday on the major world powers to act quickly to secure an end to the Bosnian war and a lasting negotiated peace settlement.

Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev and his French counterpart Alain Juppe said they expected the new diplomatic initiative launched Monday with the formation of a new four-sided contact group to coordinate policy on ending the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina to bear fruit by the end of next week.

European Union (EU), Russia, and U.S. representatives from the group — which also has United Nations input — are due Thursday to travel to Sarajevo and the nearby Bos-

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